

**THE DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OF THE EARLIEST BRITISH  
COLONIES IN THE AMERICAN TROPICS:**

**A STUDY OF THE HOUSES OF THE CARIBBEAN 'LEEWARD' ISLANDS OF  
ST. CHRISTOPHER, NEVIS, ANTIGUA AND MONTSERRAT. 1624-1726.**

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Presented to  
The Academic Faculty

By

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**To my husband, Ted.**

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## **SUMMARY**

The principle aim of this study was to delineate the domestic architecture in the first century of the earliest group of successful and permanent British colonies in the American tropics, St. Christopher, Nevis, Antigua and Montserrat. There is a gap in knowledge about this foundation period, which is peculiar because these islands were major players in the British mercantile economy.

The study started with a review of contextual material, the geography and history of the islands in that period, travelogues of English and French visitors and current scholarship about the architecture. The research involved the examination of manuscripts in eighteen archives or collections in the UK, USA and Caribbean. The historical data accumulated was primarily inventories and brief descriptions of houses, business correspondence and a small number of official maps. A volume of some 300 building descriptions compiled for compensation by the British Parliament lent itself to analysis using statistical information. The results identified house types, stylistic trends and furnishing, the manner of use, and indications of construction methods. The balance of the material complemented, confirmed and expanded the findings by statistical analysis.

In the first century of English colonization (1624-1726) of the American tropics, there was a significant degree of interaction and exchange between the Amerindian and British peoples, according to the record in the Caribbean Leeward Islands. The architecture of the early colonial period in the Leeward Islands recorded the colonists' process of adaptation to the environment using Carib techniques and lore while

preserving the most essential of customary practices, the spatial arrangement of the three room farmhouses of Britain. With the increase in affluence and numbers, due to sugar production, a British aesthetic asserted itself and became dominant with the result that the Carib culture was visually absent in the colonial landscapes that supported a British identity. The study indicates the important role of national culture and tradition, of familiar geometries and customary practices in the creation and configuration of architecture and landscape. It also identified a number of similarities with other colonies in the Americas.



## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION.

This chapter outlines the intention and context of the study. It starts by identifying the topic and intention. Then, it continues with a descriptive overview of the geography, history and political conditions of the ‘Leeward Islands’ in the Caribbean during the first century of European settlement. The English made their first successful settlement in this group of four islands, which was given its name in the mid-1660s because of its location relative to the French stronghold of Guadeloupe.

### 1.1 INTENTION OF THE STUDY

Renewed appreciation of seventeenth century English America as a coherent region requires an understanding of the Caribbean colonies that is both larger and more precise than a surrogate can impart. The tiny Leeward Islands later swelled the wealth of Britain out of proportion to their size and became significant places for the movement of people and the creolization of culture.<sup>1</sup>

The intent of this dissertation is to inquire into the architecture of the early British colonies in the tropical Americas during the first century of settlement. The study starts in 1624, when Englishmen founded the first tropical colony that survived, on St. Christopher, and continues into the period when the West Indian ‘sugar islands’ generated great wealth for Britain. It covers four neighboring islands of St. Christopher,

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<sup>1</sup> Riva Berleant-Schiller, "Free Labor and the Economy in Seventeenth-century Montserrat," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., Vol. 46, no. 3 (1989).

Nevis, Antigua and Montserrat on the Caribbean island chain, which the British called the Leeward Islands.<sup>2</sup> [Figure 1.1]



Figure 1. 1. Location of the Leeward Islands in the West Indies. [Britannica Atlas]

<sup>2</sup> Foundation Devonian, ed., *Extracts from the Codrington Papers pertaining to the family archives with its plantations in Antigua and other islands in the West Indies during the period 1649-1924*. (Calgary, Canada: 1988).

During the late seventeenth-century, the minuscule Leeward Islands, along with Barbados and later Jamaica<sup>3</sup>, fomented the “Sugar Revolution”, which is considered by some historians to be the first industrial revolution.<sup>4</sup> The production of sugar and its by-products was a major dynamo of the British maritime economy. The English and North Americans manufactured goods, provided foodstuff and labor to the West Indian islands in ships and returned home with tropical commodities to satisfy the new taste for sweet and the market for rum. These economic activities created wealth for both the colonists and mother country.

Nearly four centuries later, there is a peculiar gap in knowledge about the architecture of the innovative and dynamic British colonists. The lack of standing structures, the silence in the contemporary literature about the buildings and the cryptic nature of surviving descriptions have created the impression that the buildings were inconsequential, mean and of a temporary nature. However, is it reasonable to accept that the people who were generating wealth on a world scale were content to live under minimal conditions?

Encouraged by new approaches to the study of vernacular architecture and material culture, this study takes a fresh look at the surviving documentary evidence of the early British colonial architecture. The goal is to cast some light on the forgotten architecture of the wealthy colonies, to learn about

- Trends and changes over the period of this study.
- Forms and functional arrangements of the domestic structures.
- Adaptations to the environment.

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<sup>3</sup> Barbados was founded in 1627, and the British seized Jamaica from the Spanish in 1655.

<sup>4</sup> B.W. Higman, "The Sugar Revolution," *The Economic History Review. New Series*. 53, no. 2 (2000).

- The expression of personal success or aspirations in the architecture.

The balance of this study is organized into seven chapters and appendices.

Chapter One introduces the topic and provides an overview of the geography and history of the Leeward Islands in the first century of English settlement. Chapter Two is a review of the literature about Leeward Islands' architecture in the period. Chapter Three reports on the methodology of the research. Chapters Four, Five and Six deal with the interpretation of the data. Chapter Seven is a summary of the study with conclusions. The appendices are at the end the study.

## 1.2 GEOGRAPHY.

St. Christopher, Nevis, Antigua and Montserrat are among the smallest of the West Indian islands. With the exception of the island of Barbados, which is out in the Atlantic, these islands mark the boundary between the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea,. The Leeward Islands of this study lie between latitudes 16 and 18 degrees north and are within sight of each other on a clear day.

The West Indies is a volcanic region that grew up where the North American and Caribbean tectonic plates interact<sup>5</sup>; the landmasses formed where magma rose to the surface of the sea. Other geological events raised calcareous material to the surface. resulting in islands of limestone and Antigua, for instance, has both volcanic and calcareous materials. In recorded history, the only active volcano in the Leewards is on Montserrat. Since 1996, it has created a modern day Pompeii by burying the capital town

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<sup>5</sup> Tony Gibbs, "Natural Hazards in the Caribbean."

of Plymouth and half the rest of the island under pyroclastic material. The other Leeward Islands have extinct or dormant volcanic craters, souffrières or hot springs.

All the West Indian islands, except Barbados, frequently experience moderate to severe earthquakes and tremors.<sup>6</sup> North-East Trade winds moderate the tropical maritime climate of the islands to an average annual temperature of 83 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level, which varies about 12 degrees in either direction. The climate was pleasant according to one visitor who wrote in the seventeenth century that “ The aire very pleasant and healthfull, but exceeding hot, yet so tempered with coole breaths, it seemes very temperate to them, that are a little used to it”.<sup>7</sup>

The islands are too small to create weather patterns so that the rainfall, of between twenty and seventy inches per annum, is dependant on the moisture of the trade winds and the immediate topography. These trade winds and the ocean currents they produce sweep in Atlantic hurricanes during the latter part of the year, and, in 1492, brought Spanish and Portuguese explorers in sailing ships to the islands. [Figure 1.2]

When the Europeans first arrived, they met the Amerindians, who lived in villages on those islands with rivers and fertile soil. The Spanish called the Indians of the Lesser Antilles ‘Caribs’, hence the name the Caribby Islands. Neither the Spanish nor the Portuguese made any effort to settle in the Lesser Antilles because they were “not respected by the Spanyards, for want of harbors, and their better choice of good land, and

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<sup>6</sup> The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency. CDERA., "Natural Hazards in the Caribbean," USAID/OAS PGDM. Gibbs. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631) in Three Volumes.*, Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press., 1986 )... Chap. XXII.231-2.

profit in the maine”.<sup>8</sup> However, the Spanish did raid the populations for a labor force<sup>9</sup>, and Spain held that the Caribbean islands were part of her domain, patrolling the Leewards well into the seventeenth century.

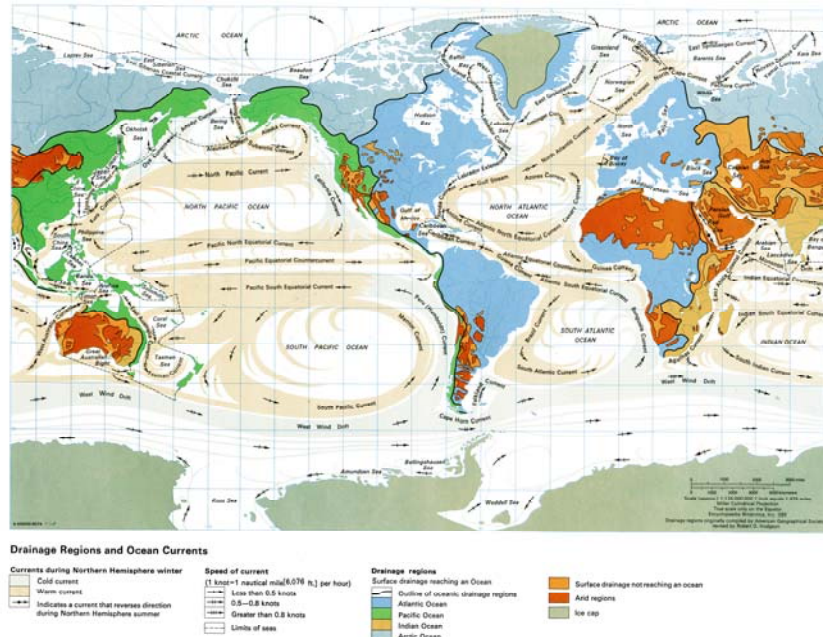


Figure 1.2. World Ocean currents. [Britannica Atlas]

The resources of the islands were the woods, abundant fieldstone, and the sea, sand, shells and coral. In 1631, a settler Sir Henry Colt wrote that on St. Christopher the trees did not grow large, but “Ye woods are thick, ye mountaynes and hills manye; all ye water and springs comes from the hills & mountaynes and through ye woods”.<sup>10</sup> The trees yielded tropical hardwoods, like *lignum vitae*, mastick and locus for construction

<sup>8</sup> Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)* Institute of Early American History and Culture (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1986). Vol. 3. Chap.xxv. 231.

<sup>9</sup> David Watts, *The West Indies. Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492*, ed. Alan R.H. Baker, J.B. Harley, and David Ward, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography 8 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994; reprint, First). 109.

<sup>10</sup> Henry Colt, "The Voyage of Sir Henry Colt, written at St. Kitts of a voyage begun 22 May 1631 giving descriptions of St. Kitts and Barbados, details of an attack by a Spanish fleet and advice to son to undertake a similar voyage " in *Colonising expeditions of the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1631).

and palmetto for roofing thatch. The silk cotton provided material that was “as goode for beds as downe”.<sup>11</sup> Fieldstone was readily available, as it still is, due to the volcanic nature of the islands, and the shore near the English settlement on St. Christopher was “full of great stones yt endaungereth ye breakinge of a boat”.<sup>12</sup> For food, there were pawpaw, pomegranate and banana trees growing wild, as were watermelons and peas. The Caribs also had ground provisions of cassava and potatoes.<sup>13</sup> The early settlers benefited from the islands’ resources, which, however, did not last long, and within fifty years, Governor Colonel Philip Warner said of St. Christopher, “There is no wood”<sup>14</sup>.

The English settled St. Christopher in 1624. It has an area of 68 square miles. [Figure 1.3] The wider part of the island is fertile with a deep, loamy soil interspersed with small volcanic stones, and a spine of hills divides the arable land in two. The highest point, at the elevation of 3,792 feet, is on the rim of a dormant volcanic crater. At one time, small rivers ran down the hills to the sea. The narrow peninsula of 18 square miles has thin soil and salt ponds, making it barren. Because the regular coastline has no pronounced bays, the best anchorage is an open bay or roadstead.

The second settlement was on Nevis<sup>15</sup> in 1627. The smallest of the four Leeward Islands, it has an area of only 36 square miles. [Figure 1.4] Nevis is essentially a volcanic cone with side vents. Fluffy clouds generally hide the highest point on the rim of the extinct crater at an elevation of 3,232 feet<sup>16</sup>. The soil has a high clay content and is stony due to small volcanic boulders. The volcanic past left a thick bed of terras or

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<sup>11</sup>Barbour, ed. Vol. 3. Chap.xxv. 232.

<sup>12</sup> Colt.. 89.

<sup>13</sup> Barbour, ed. Vol. 3.Chap xxiv. 233.

<sup>14</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State papers. Colonial Series. America and West Indies.*, vol. 5, 7 and 9 (London: Longman & Co., 1880). 124.

<sup>15</sup> Nevis is pronounced Nee-vis.

<sup>16</sup> One story about the naming of the island is that Columbus thought that the peak was snow-covered so named the island *Nuestra Senora de las Nieves*.



volcanic sand underlying a thin layer of pervious rock. The fresh water streams are seasonal<sup>17</sup>, Europeans knew the island before settlement because of the curative properties of the hot springs near the seashore<sup>18</sup>. The best roadstead lies on the west coast.

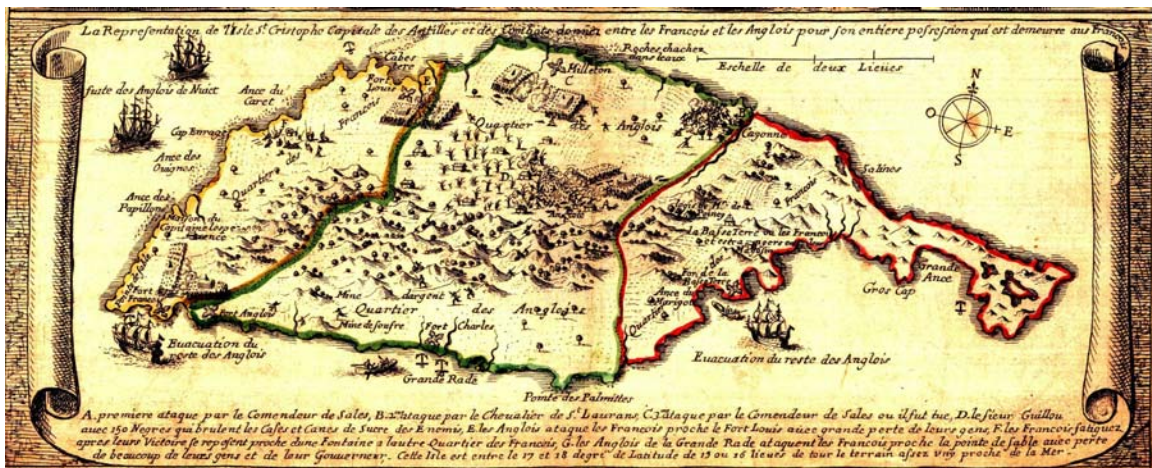


Figure 1. 3. St. Christopher's Island. Detail of Vouillemont Map of 1667. [Library of Congress]

In 1631/2, Irishmen, under the English Crown, first occupied Montserrat, which has an active volcano and an area of forty square miles. [Figure 1.5] It is mountainous and precipitous, which results in high rainfall and lush, green vegetation even though the soil is thin. Because of the shortage of flat land, the island was never heavily populated. Similar to Nevis and St. Christopher, there are no natural harbors.

<sup>17</sup> Meniketti suggests that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the rainfall was high and that several streams may have been running.

<sup>18</sup> Barbour, ed. Vol. 3. Chap xxvii. 235.





Figure 1.4. *Map of Nevis*. 18<sup>th</sup> century French Map

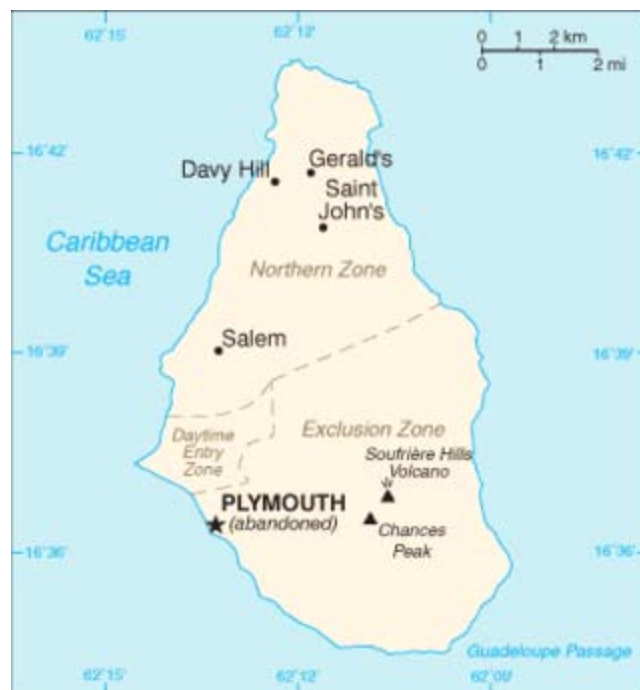


Figure. 1. 5. Map of Montserrat. 2005. [CIA Website].

In 1632, English families from St. Christopher occupied the low-lying island of Antigua, whose main assets were its relatively large size of 108 square miles and the indented coastline that provided several safe harbors. The finest harbor, English Harbor, is the bed of an extinct volcanic crater.<sup>19</sup> [Figure 1.6]. Even though there is little other evidence of a volcanic past, the island does experience earthquakes. Are earthquakes and volcanoes related? Is this last sentence necessary or relevant? Of the four main Leeward Islands, this is the only one with extensive areas of limestone. Antigua's major disadvantage is the absence of fresh water springs. During droughts, even in the early colonial period in peacetime, the settlers shipped in water from Montserrat and from Guadeloupe.<sup>20</sup>

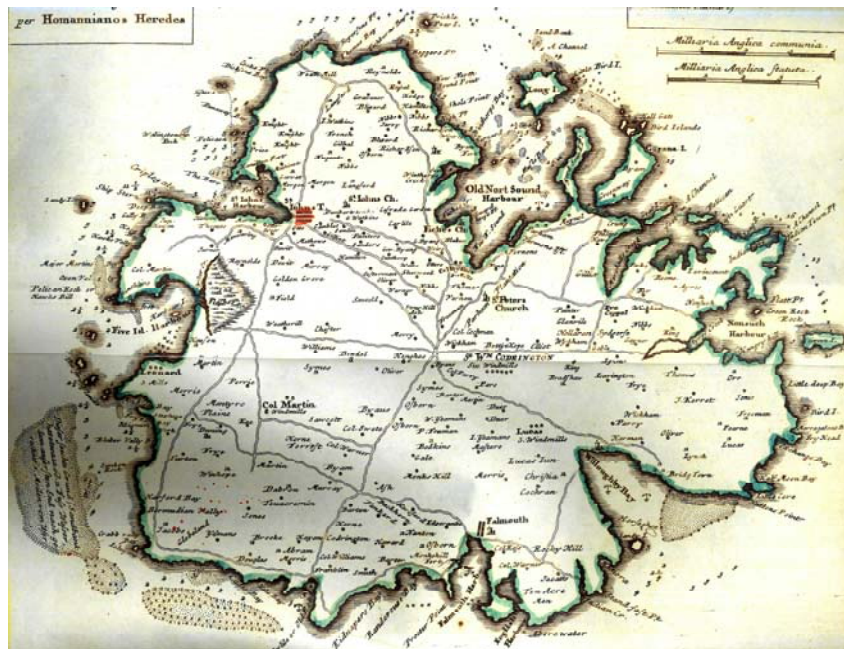


Figure 1.6. Detail of the *Homann Map of 1725* showing the island of Antigua.  
[Library of Congress]

<sup>19</sup> Vere Langford Oliver, "The History of the Island of Antigua - One of the Leeward Caribbees in the West Indies - from the first settlement in 1635 to the present. Volume 1.," (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 140 Wardour Street W, 1894). B.

<sup>20</sup> Bowen Eman, "A New and Accurate Map of the Island of Antigua or Antego Taken from Surveys and Adjusted by Astron<sup>l</sup> Observations," in *Geography and Map Division* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1747).

### 1.3 SETTLEMENT AND GOVERNANCE.

Starting in the mid-sixteenth century, north-west European sailors became familiar with the Caribby Islands, for they stopped there for refreshment after the Atlantic crossing and bartered with the Caribs for foods before continuing to the Iberian colonies and later Virginia.<sup>21</sup> The sailors exploited the islands' resources; one example is Bartholomew Gilbert, who cut *lignum vitae* and bought tobacco from the Caribs on Nevis on his way to Virginia in 1603.<sup>22</sup> Others, like Captain John Smith, wrote with distaste about his stay on the islands.<sup>23</sup> The only European settlements in the Lesser Antilles, prior to the seventeenth century, were those of *los corsairos luteranos*, bands of shipwrecked Irish and English sailors and religious exiles.<sup>24</sup>

King James I (1603-1625) and his councilors discouraged English incursions in the tropical regions of the Americas because, as Lord Digby argued in 1619, it was "prejudicial to the King of Spain" adding that the Spanish Ambassador at his arrival would prevent it.<sup>25</sup> The next year, for fear of reprisal from the Spanish, the King withdrew the commissions of a group of adventurers who had secretly embarked for the Amazon under the brother of Lord North.<sup>26</sup> This timid attitude vanished with the passing of James I. Within days of his accession, Charles I 's councilors raised proposals for outfitting a fleet to attack the Spanish settlements. They discussed the "advantages

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<sup>21</sup> Note: John Hawkins is known to have watered his ships at Dominica in both 1565 and 1568. Sir Francis Drake landed on St. Christophers in 1585. Captain Newport and Captain John Smith landed at Nevis in 1607 enroute to Virginia. [Frederick Henry Watkins, I.S.O., *Handbook of the Leeward Islands*. (London: The West India Committee, 1924). 3 &9] These are among the better-known names of these Elizabethan maritime adventurers who recorded their adventures and findings in the Americas.

<sup>22</sup> John C. Appleby, "English Settlement in the Lesser Antilles during War and Peace, 1603-1660." 89.

<sup>23</sup> Barbour, ed. Chap xxv. 231.

<sup>24</sup> Watts. 142.

<sup>25</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, Esq., ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574-1660*, vol. 1-5 (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860). April 30. 1619. 21.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. May 15 1620. 23.

derived by the Spanish and the Dutch from the West Indies showing that it is neither safe nor profitable for them to be absolute lords of those islands”. Up to that time, the English efforts to raise tobacco in the Amazon region and the Guianas, using Amerindian labor, had been less than profitable.<sup>27</sup>

A group of two or three men, led by one Captain Thomas Warner, abandoned the unsuccessful North expedition (1620) in the Orinoco and went in search of a suitable island to start their own venture. They visited St. Christopher, which Captain Painton had recommended because of its fertile soil, rivers, friendly Carib inhabitants and defensibility. The English erroneously believed that they could easily defend the island. As Captain John Smith wrote, “such a Snuffe of the Sea goeth on the shore, ten may better defend, than fifty assault”.<sup>28</sup>

In January 1624, Warner and a group of fifteen adventurers and servants<sup>29</sup> returned to St. Christopher in the West Indies, and founded the first English tropical settlement that survived.<sup>30</sup> Initially, it was a private financial venture of younger sons of yeomen and minor gentry in East Anglia, with backing from the London-based merchants Ralph Merrifield and Maurice Thomson.<sup>31</sup> The leader, for instance, Thomas Warner (1580-1649), came from a yeoman<sup>32</sup> family in Parham, Suffolk; being a younger son he had joined the military, served in James I bodyguard, and been a lieutenant at the Tower

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<sup>27</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, Esq., ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574-1660*, vol. 1-5 (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860). 1625.

<sup>28</sup> Barbour, ed. Vol. III Chap xxv. 227. John Hylton, "Personal Narratives of Pioneer Settlements in the 17th century," in *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana (1623-1667). Second Series*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925).

<sup>29</sup> Barbour, ed. Vol. III. Chap xxv. 228.

<sup>30</sup> V.T. Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, vol. Series II. LVI, Hakluyt Society (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925). 26

<sup>31</sup> Barbour, ed.

<sup>32</sup> Note: a yeoman was a property owner. This class had been the most prosperous in rural areas of England, apart from the aristocracy, since Henry VIII had abolished the monasteries and sold their lands.

of London prior to joining the North expedition.<sup>33</sup> Charles I knighted him in 1625, when he appointed him governor of all the Caribby islands. John Jeaffreson, appointed as lieutenant governor at the same time, had a similar background; he was a ship's captain from a family of "small estate" in Suffolk<sup>34</sup>. [Figure 1.7]

The French had also recognized St. Christopher as the most promising island for tobacco farming in the American tropics, and, under Richelieu in 1623, organized a company to settle the island.<sup>35</sup> In 1625, a boatload of settlers from Dieppe, under Pierre Belain d'Esnambouc, arrived on the island. The Frenchman and Edward Warner, in his father's absence, agreed to divide the island and signed a treaty of friendship on 13 May 1627. This gave the English the central portion with the best water sources and left the French with the ends, which they called Capesterre and Basseterre, and the best roadstead. [See Figure 1.2] The treaty included a clause agreeing that the two groups would remain neutral during European conflicts, which treaty and its successors served them well until the 1660's<sup>36</sup>. The initial shortage of European women precipitated efforts to annihilate the Carib men; the English and French collaborated and murdered many Carib men after hearing of a planned Carib reprisal for "some injury about their women, in 1626".<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> 2005 Oxford Dictionary of Biography.

<sup>34</sup> Hylton. Note: Jeaffreson first arrived in 1625 bringing provisions and settlers.

<sup>35</sup> Herbert Ingram Priestley, *France Overseas Through The Old Regime. A Study of European Expansion.*, Institute of Social Sciences, University of California (New York & London: D. Appleton-Century Company Incorporated, 1939).

<sup>36</sup> Sieur Philipe de Bouvilliers Bailly de Poincy and Colonel Clement Ward, "Entre Sieur Philipe de Bouvilliers Bailly de Poincy et honorable Colonel Clement Ward " in *Microfilm: Archives Nationales (France)* (Basseterre: National Archives of St. Kitts, 1639).

<sup>37</sup> Barbour, ed. Vol. III. 29



Figure 1.7. The tombs of Sir Thomas Warner (d. 1649) and of Samuel Jefferson (d. 1648), brother of John, in the cemetery at Middle Island, St. Kitts. [Hobson]

When Warner returned to England in September 1625, with a cargo of tobacco and reported to the Privy Council on his “discovery of the islands of St. Christopher, Nevis, Barbados and Montserrat,” Charles I (1625-1649) knighted him and appointed him King’s lieutenant for the Caribby islands.<sup>38</sup> The king gave Warner full power to make ordinances, articles and orders, to trade freely in commodities and encourage settlers to the islands. Nevertheless, under pressure from his father’s favorite, in 1627, it was the Earl of Carlisle to whom Charles I granted proprietary rights over all of the non-Spanish West Indies. Carlisle never took up residence, but leased most of his powers to Francis, Lord Willoughby of Parham, who resided in Barbados, and came to some

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<sup>38</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers [Colonial Series]. America and West Indies. 1574-1660* (Burlington, Ontario, Canada.: TannerRichie Publishing, 2004). 23.

arrangement with other persons, like Warner, in the Leeward Islands.<sup>39</sup> Warner was able to rule the British part of St. Christopher as a personal fiefdom until his death in 1649<sup>40</sup>.

Under the Commonwealth (1650 -1660), Parliament enacted legislation to ensure that Britain extracted the maximum advantage from the West India trade; these measures became even more onerous over time. In 1651, Parliament passed the first Navigation Act, which confined colonial shipping to boats and crews that were seventy-five percent British. In parallel with increases in the volume of colonial trade, Parliament limited trade to British vessels and imposed higher taxes on exports from the islands; the sugar products attracted the dreaded 4 ½% impost.

After the restoration of the monarchy, Charles II abolished proprietary ownership of the West Indies, and the Crown and Councils took over responsibility for the security of the West Indian colonies and established the Leeward Islands as a colony under a governor-in chief, or captain-general, in 1668<sup>41</sup>. The Crown appointed Sir Charles Wheeler as the first governor-in-chief in 1671.<sup>42</sup> This was the 'old Representative system,' where the Crown appointed the governor-general and confirmed the lieutenant governor and an advisory council of twelve that were nominated by a select group of leading inhabitants.

Thereafter, the governors-in chief and governors established Courts of Judicature and enacted legislation to establish towns and to safeguard property and morals.<sup>43</sup> The councils initiated the regular maintenance of public highways, the rental of jails, and the

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<sup>39</sup> Other governors during the Proprietary period were Edward Warner, Thomas Ashton and Samuel Winthrop of Antigua, James Russell and Luke Stokes of Nevis and, Anthony Briskett of Montserrat ; they made arrangements with Carlisle to govern their respective islands.

<sup>40</sup> Harlow, ed.27.

<sup>41</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers [Colonial Series]. America and West Indies. 1574-1660.*

<sup>42</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* (Burlington, Ontario: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2004). 157.

<sup>43</sup> "Laws of Montserrat," in *Colonial State Papers* (London: National Archives, 1668-1740 inclusive).



construction of coastal fortifications, which they implemented by direct labor contracts or levies on the inhabitants.<sup>44</sup> The ambitious Wheeler proposed instituting schools and a college under the Bishop of London, but he abandoned his post before any such initiatives bore fruit.<sup>45</sup>

#### 1.4 MIGRATION AND POPULATIONS

St. Christopher was the ‘Mother Colony’ of the British and French in the West Indies. After settlement, the population of St. Christopher increased so rapidly that the arable land was taken up, and in 1627, new arrivals and disgruntled persons started settlements on the nearby island of Nevis. The English considered that the Irish were a potential “fifth column”, and after 1631/2, they encouraged Irishmen and Roman Catholics to settle on Montserrat. In 1632, Warner’s son, Edward, led some 30 settlers to begin a new life on the dry island of Antigua. Soon, the French started settlements on the more southerly islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique and signed a peace treaty with the Caribs to reserve Dominica and St. Vincent for the Indians.

The settlers and investors needed a workforce to clear the wooded islands and to establish farms; this demand drew thousands of indentured servants from England and Ireland. In the 1620’s, for the majority of the populace, the living conditions in England and Ireland were poor. This provided an incentive for thousands to emigrate to unknown lands in search of farmland and a fortune, or at least a living<sup>46</sup>. The land enclosures in England had turned vast numbers of the rural population into vagrants, and the towns

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<sup>44</sup> Antigua and Nevis Council Minutes in Colonial State Papers (London: National Archives).

<sup>45</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* #592.242

<sup>46</sup> Watts. 137-139.



offered few opportunities because they were overcrowded and disease-ridden. In Ireland, Oliver Cromwell's 1649 expedition to crush the Catholics had only served to exacerbate the dislocations from the Tudor plantations in the north of the country.

The West Indies was the preferred destination for bonded migrants; shipping records indicate that before 1700, 220,000 of the 378,000 who emigrated from the British Isles to the Americas went to the West Indian islands.<sup>47</sup> The Leewards offered the chance for social mobility, and a number of resourceful servants became substantial landowners.<sup>48</sup> As late as the 1670's, when land was scarce, Christopher Jeaffreson of St. Christopher commented on the opportunities:

[servants] at the expiration of their term (which is usually four years, sometimes three) they being well known at first setting up for themselves, their gaynes are verry considerable; so they may soon grow riche, if they be good husbandes.<sup>49</sup>

In the early years, financiers sent agents to manage their properties, and they outfitted ships with supplies and a labor force of indentured servants. At first, the majority of the servants were English, but after 1630, large numbers of Irish left from the ports of Limerick and Kinsale.<sup>50</sup> Dutch merchants co-operated by filling their ships with impoverished Irish men and women for the outward Atlantic crossing, and selling the

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<sup>47</sup> Henry A. Gemery, "Emigration from the British Isles to the New World, 1630-1700: Inferences from Colonial Populations.," in *Research in Economic History. A Research Annual*, ed. Paul Uselding (Greenwich, Connecticut: AIJAI Press Inc., 1980). Xxx. Donald Harman Akenson, *If the Irish Ran the World. Montserrat, 1630-1730*, The Joanne Goodman Lectures of the University of Western Ontario, 1997. (Montreal and Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997). 138. Note: To exacerbate matters there were a number of poor harvests and bitter winters in the 1620's and an unexplained increase in the live male births in both countries.

<sup>48</sup> David W. Galenson, "The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis," *The Journal of Economic History* 44, no. 1 (1984).

<sup>49</sup> John Cordy Jeaffreson, author of "A Book About Doctors" , "Brides and Bridals" etc, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century from Papers (AD 1676-1686)* (London: Hurst and Blackett, Publishers., 1878). 208.

<sup>50</sup> Watts. 150.

bonds to the colonists on the islands.<sup>51</sup> Historians comment on the flow of the Irish to the West Indies, which did not wane despite efforts to ban them by legislation in Barbados in 1644, and in Nevis in 1701.<sup>52</sup> The English believed that these poor Irish were “always a bloody and perfidious people to the English Protestant cause”.<sup>53</sup>

The planters treated the Irish servants so abysmally that it is not surprising that the servants sought every means to escape and colluded with the enemy whenever they attacked the islands. As early as 1629, when the Spanish fleet under de Toledo fired on the ships at Nevis, John Hilton told how “our Servants proved treacherous, runn away from vs & Swimed aboard and told them where we hid our provisions & in what case our Islands stood in”.<sup>54</sup> In 1666, Irish servants in St. Christopher abandoned their indentures and assisted the French to rob and burn the buildings of their English masters.<sup>55</sup> The next year, the Irish servants aided the French in their sack of the estates on Montserrat. However, in this case, the greatest loser was the Irish governor, Anthony Brisket; the Lord Proprietor confiscated Brisket’s estates of over 1000 acres for his collusion with the French.<sup>56</sup>

This antagonism did not extend to the educated Irish; wealthy Irishmen became lieutenant governors of Montserrat, Councilors on other islands, and even governors-in-chief, like the energetic Sir William Stapleton (d. 1686) despite being Roman Catholic. In Montserrat, the island’s most prominent residents and big planters, like the Blakes and Lynches, were from the “Fourteen Tribes” of Ireland, a clique of wealthy and influential

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<sup>51</sup> Akenson. 33.

<sup>52</sup> Hilary McD Beckles, "A "riotous and unruly lot": Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713.," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series., Vol.47, no. 4 (1990). 508.

<sup>53</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-.1674* 5vols., vol. 5-9 (London: Longman & Co, 1880).. June 1666. #1213.

<sup>54</sup> Hylton. 10.

<sup>55</sup> Beckles. 519.

<sup>56</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* . 28.

Galway-based merchant families. These landed Irish were astute and did not draw attention to their religious beliefs; indeed, like Anthony Briskett, who built the Anglican Church in Montserrat, they expressed great support for Protestantism and the English cause.<sup>57</sup>

In the mid-century, an influx of new settlers leavened the population, which was predominantly time-expired servants. Following the Restoration, King Charles II granted large tracts of land in the Leewards to some of his supporters to allow them to recoup their losses.<sup>58</sup> In spite of the European political rivalries, there were “a great many French and Dutch inhabitants in the English ground”<sup>59</sup> of St. Christopher in the 1670’s. In large part, the French-speakers were Huguenots from Flanders and France, whom the Councils had encouraged to settle in the Leewards for they were industrious, wealthy and Protestant. In 1673, even before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), the Huguenots in St. Christopher built a church in the English quarter.<sup>60</sup> Another group of exiles was the educated Sephardim who fled Brazil and started to arrive in Nevis in the 1670’s; by 1725, they comprised a quarter of the free population of Charleston, living in an area on the south side of the town.<sup>61</sup> [Table 1.1]

The Protestant English were the politically dominant group in the Leewards, and even the English were diverse. Warner’s adventurers originated in East Anglia, but persons came from other regions of the south and west: Somerset, Gloucestershire, Devon, Essex and Hertfordshire. Anthony Hilton, who settled Nevis, hailed from

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<sup>57</sup> Natalie Zacek, "Dangerous tenants: conflict and community in a colonial British American world, 1670-1763" (PhD, Johns Hopkins University, 2000). 83-157.

<sup>58</sup>Devonian Foundation, ed., *Extracts from the Codrington Papers pertaining to the family archives with its plantations in Antigua and other islands in the West Indies during the period 1649-1924*. (Calgary, Canada: 1988).

<sup>59</sup> Jeaffreson. 216.

<sup>60</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* #1042. 470.

<sup>61</sup> Michelle M. Terrell, "The Historical Archaeology of the 17th and 18th century Jewish community of Nevis, British West Indies." (PhD, Boston University, 2000).

Durham, but the close links of that island with Bristol are evident from the names like Westbury, Montpelier, Broom, and Pinney of archival records. In Antigua, Samuel Winthrop, a leader of the Quaker community and youngest son of the governor of Massachusetts, was one of the first large scale sugar planters with over 1000 acres of land; between 1668 and 1671 he served as lieutenant-governor of that island.<sup>62</sup>

There were two large under classes: the poor Irish and the enslaved Africans. It has been accepted that the first Africans arrived in St. Christopher in 1626 based on the statement: "this deponent [was] sent out to St. Christopher's with Captain Coomes to plante [with] about sixty slaves".<sup>63</sup> The modern mind interprets the word 'slaves' as unfree persons of African descent, rather than as a civil status. Nevertheless, the seventeenth century meaning is evident in William Freeman's report of 1669, when he told of a hurricane following the French capture of St. Christopher, when "several hundreds of pitiful poor were suffered to settle under the French, no better than slaves, paying them ½ or 1/3 of the produce of their labor".<sup>64</sup> No one ever paid African slaves 1/3 of the produce of their efforts. Typically, the Europeans referred to the African slaves as Negroes in the seventeenth century.

Economic historians figure that between the years 1651 and 1725, some 110,000 Africans landed on the islands and that the slavers captured the Negroes in West Africa,

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<sup>62</sup> Larry D. Gragg, "A Puritan in the West Indies: the Career of Samuel Winthrop," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series 50, no. 4 (1993).

<sup>63</sup> Mr. Morice Thompson, St. Christophers, "(iii). A Brief Collection of the Depositions of Witnesses and Pleadings of Commissioners at Law in a difference depending between the Merchants and Inhabitants of Barbados on the One Part and the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Willoughby, &c., on the Other Part. The said depositions were taken the 15,17,19,& 26 of March 1647 and the 9 of April 1647.," in *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667.*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: The Hakluyt Society., 1924).

<sup>64</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* . 49. #131.

the Ivory Coast, the Gold coast and the Bight of Benin.<sup>65</sup> By 1678, Sir William Stapleton's census of the Leewards assessed the population at 10,408 whites and 8,460 Negroes; in Montserrat, the ratio of whites to Negroes was three to one, but on the other islands, the populations were nearly even.<sup>66</sup> By the turn of the century, the Negroes were the predominant ethnic group; they were also the most valuable possession of the community not only because they were the labor force for the sugar plantations, but because of their actual purchase price. The sugar planters acquired numbers of Negroes for their plantations. Smallholders and merchants bought a few as household and artisans workers.

For many years after settlement, Caribs still lived in remote areas of St. Christopher. In 1629 when the Spanish attacked the island, "about 400 English fled to the mountains and were succored by the Indians".<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> David Watts, *The West Indies. Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492*, ed. Alan R.H. Baker, J.B. Harley, and David Ward, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography 8 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994; reprint, First).. 365.

<sup>66</sup> Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery. An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775.*, Caribbean Student Edition ed. (Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire: Ginn and Company; Dept. of History, University of the West Indies, 1976). 150.

<sup>67</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers [Colonial Series]. America and West Indies. 1574-1660*. 102.

**Table 1.1 The Population of the Leeward Islands compiled from various sources.**

Source	Years	Details	St				Total
			Antigua	Christopher	Nevis	Montserrat	
		Year of settlement	1632	1623/4	1627	1632	
Smith	1629	Europeans		3,000			
Watts( 173)	1642			20,000	10,000		
		All peoples, but not indigenes					
Akenson (214) ; Bridenbaugh (13)	1650		900	20,000	5,000	1,000	
Sheridan (185)	1655	Europeans	1,000-1, 200				
				5,000-8,000 planters and servants fled from the French.	1400 planters with families and servants migrated to Jamaica.		
	1665	Europeans	2,000				
Sheridan . 189/Pares.22	1672	European men	1,052		1,411	1,171	
Pares. 22		negroes	570		1,739	523	
Sheridan. 150	1678	Europeans	2,308	1,897	3,521	2,682	10,408
		Negroes	2,172	1,436	3,860	992	8,460
CSPC Vol 23. 146.	1706	H.M. regular troops (m,w,c)			75		
		Seamen on vessels			330		
		Men & officers			430		
		Women			311		
		Children			612		
		Negroes			6,023		
	1708	Europeans	2,909	1,670	1,104		
		Negroes	12,943	3,258	3,676		
Sheridan 172	1719	Europeans				386	
		Negroes				4,192	
	1720	Europeans	3,652	2,800	1,343	1,688	9,483
		Negroes	19,186	7,321	5,689	3,772	35,968
Pares.22.	1729	Total European			1,296		
		Men			373		
		Negroes			5,646		

## 1.5 SETBACKS AND HAZARDS.

Hurricanes, earthquakes and warfare marred the first century of European settlement in the Leewards. The settlers who remained were stouthearted and determined to succeed in the Leewards. Many took the option of re-migration to Jamaica<sup>68</sup> and to the northern mainland colonies.<sup>69</sup> [Table. 1.2]

**Table 1.2 Partial List of Treaties, Warfare and Hostilities in the Leeward Islands: 1624-1726**

Date	Event	Island	Effect
1625	Uprising of 1500 of the population at the hanging of Sander Short for calling Colonel Jeaffreson a traitor. [Hakluyt, 29]	St. Christopher's	Revolt put down by the son of Governor Warner with the assistance of the French.
1627	St Christopher's formally partitioned between French and English and called for joint military action against Caribs and Spanish.[Sheridan. 151]	St. Christopher's.	The English held the middle of the island with the rivers: the French quarters were the end of the islands, Capesterre and Basseterre, which had more easily protected roads for shipping.
1629	Spanish naval raid under de Toledo	St. Christopher's and Nevis	Temporary evacuations by British and French settlers.
1640's	Carib raids.	Antigua	The wife and 2 children of the governor, Edward Warner, and other settler wives were taken away to Dominica; some never returned.[Titford on Antigua (11)]
1651	Carib raid.	Montserrat	
1665	French invasion and raid	Antigua	Women and children were sent to Nevis until the Treaty of Breda [Gragg (773)]
1666	French invasion and raid	Montserrat	800 English left for Jamaica in 1667 [Sheridan. P171]
10th April 1666	French fell upon the English on the Windward coast then came around the west of the island.[Hakluyt 21].	St. Christopher's	Over 5000 English who were driven off their land and 800 English migrated to Virginia, Jamaica and Nevis. Final settlement under Treaty of Breda which upheld the status quo ante bellum. By 1674 195 plantations were repossessed, 104 others were claimed and 139 were not.[CSPC 1668-74, p547]
1667	Two invasions by French forces. The first time a force of 1500 was aided by Indians. [Sheridan 187]	Antigua	The island was plundered, 1500 Negroes, slaves and stock were carried off.
1680's	Carib raids.	Montserrat	The Caribs of Dominica and St. Vincent burned houses and tortured and killed some of the men.
1689	French invasion	St Christopher's	English settlers driven off the island.
1690	British retake the island.	St. Christopher's	General Codrington shipped about 2000 persons to S. Domingue.
1706	French invasion and occupation for 2 months	St. Christopher's	Raid by French under d'Iberville where 800 Negroes were taken off, houses, mills and other property were destroyed.
1706	French invasion and occupation for 2 months	Nevis	Raid by French under d'Iberville where 3,187 Negroes were taken off, houses, mills and other property were destroyed. The French destroyed the legal records of the island.
1710- 1712	Three French invasions over the 2-year period.	Montserrat	Towns were burnt, houses in the country were destroyed as were sugar works, etc. Over 1200 negroes were carried off.
1713	Treaty of Utrecht	St. Christophers	French were permanently expelled from the island.
1726	Commission for sale of the former French lands.	St Christopher's	25,000 acres of land disposed of by sale. No one person was to obtain more than 200 acres. Large syndicates and planter families acquired the larger portions of land. The treatment of the smaller proprietors lead to them migrating to other countries.

<sup>68</sup> ibid. Orders of the Council of State. Nov 13, 1656. 450.

<sup>69</sup> ibid., ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-.1674* June 6, 1666. 385.

The initial setback for Warner's venture was the hurricane of 1624, which destroyed the first tobacco crop and the houses built by him and his men. The second setback came from the Spanish; in 1629, a flotilla of 36 vessels sent by King Philip IV attempted to drive out both the French and the English settlers from Nevis and St. Christopher.<sup>70</sup> The Spanish burnt the houses, towns and crops and captured six hundred young men. However, some settlers hid in the hills and others set sail for nearby islands; when the danger was past, the settlers returned to their houses and farms.<sup>71</sup> Thereafter the Spanish patrolled the region, but did not invade.

Until the end of the century, the settlers lived with the constant fear that Caribs from the stronghold in Dominica, would come ashore at night to burn the crops, slaughter the settlers, or kidnap women and children. There were considerable grounds for this anxiety. In 1628, for example, Anthony Hylton "with license from Capt. Warner...did Settle upon ye windward side of ye Island, being ye first that did settle that side of the Island",<sup>72</sup> and the Caribs burnt them out; Hylton and servants moved to Nevis in anger and started a settlement. Moreover, in the 1640's, Caribs abducted the wife and children of the governor of Antigua and never returned them, and in 1667, the French stirred up the Caribs, who joined them in attacks on Antigua and Montserrat.<sup>73</sup>

The French dealt the most devastating blows to the English settlers, which was generally in retaliation for English aggression on their lands. They captured the English quarters in St. Christopher in 1666, but returned the land and properties under the Treaty of Breda (1670); the French raided and burnt Montserrat and Antigua in 1667, and again

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<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, ed., *Calendar of State Papers [Colonial Series]. America and West Indies. 1574-1660.* Vol 5. 103..

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* Nov 5 & 12 1629. 102 & 103.

<sup>72</sup> Harlow, ed. 5

<sup>73</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-1674.* June 1667. 472.



in 1712. In 1689, they overran the English in St. Christopher, but forces led by the Governor-General Christopher Codrington II forced them into exile the next year. The French returned to S. Christophe, as the French portion of the island became known, under the Treaty of Ryswick (1697), but at the start of the War of Queen Anne's War,<sup>74</sup> (1702) the English threw them off the island permanently. The French retaliated and dealt a near fatal blow to Nevis and St. Christopher in 1706, when they burnt and looted the islands for two months. The devastation to sugar production was so considerable that Queen Anne appointed a Commission in 1707 to assess and record the inhabitants' losses, and then an Act of Parliament approved the payment of reparations in 1711.<sup>75</sup>

During the period of this study, there was considerable hurricane activity in the Leewards and, in some years, two or more hurricanes hit a single island. The kindly Caribs would warn the settlers of an impending storm,<sup>76</sup> so that the fear was primarily for the financial loss. Some weary Antiguan settlers complained "terrible hurricanes destroy their crops and houses every year".<sup>77</sup> At this distance in time, it is difficult to assess which hurricanes were the most destructive, for the immediate topography and exposure of a location determines, largely, the scale of damage; several islands may be affected by the same hurricane with varying degrees of damage.<sup>78</sup> [Table 1.3].

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<sup>74</sup> Queen Anne's War is also called the War of the Spanish Succession.

<sup>75</sup> "To the Honorable Commons in Parliament Assembled. The Case of the Poor distressed planters and other inhabitants of the islands of Nevis & St. Christophers in America.," in *CUP. British Library* (London: 1709).

<sup>76</sup> Captain Langford, "Concerning hurricanes.," in *Egerton MS 2395* (British Library: 1676). Langford tells that the Caribs could discern signs in the sea about ten days in advance of a hurricane. He learned their lore and was able to save Lord Willoughby's sugars in the storehouse at Nevis by making preparations.

<sup>77</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* . 20 Nov, 1670. 135.

<sup>78</sup> A number of meteorologists have attempted to categorize the hurricanes of the colonial period – with conflicting results.

The best-recorded hurricanes are those of 1624, August 1666, two in 1681, and another in 1707 in Nevis, and this is because of the attendant circumstances. For example: in August 1666, Francis, Lord Willoughby, the Lord Proprietor's lessee, drowned off Guadeloupe in a hurricane<sup>79</sup>, with six merchant ships and, depending on the source, 800 to 5,000 men. The small army had embarked in Barbados to relieve St. Christopher, and their loss resulted in the French taking the island. Christopher Jeaffreson recorded his ordeals during two hurricanes in St. Christopher in 1681; he returned to England the next year. In 1707, a hurricane that hit Nevis found the inhabitants without the shelter of their houses for the French had wrecked them in the previous year. Interestingly, St. Christopher made no similar cries.

**Table 1.3 Schedule of hurricanes based on Peoy's Chronological Table of 400 Cyclonic hurricanes that occurred in the West Indies and in the North Atlantic Ocean from 1493 to 1855.**

Year	Localities
1624*	St. Christopher
1642	Windward Islands, Martinique, St. Christopher
1650	St. Christopher
1652	St. Christopher, Martinique, Guadeloupe
1656	Leewards and other Antilles
1658	Leewards and other Antilles
1660	Leewards and other Antilles
1664	Antigua, Guadeloupe
1666	St. Christopher, Guadeloupe, Martinique
1667	Barbados, Nevis*
1667	St. Christopher
1681	Antigua
1691	Leewards and other Antilles
1701	Leewards and other Antilles
1705	Nevis, Antigua
1707	Nevis, Antigua
1718	Nevis
1722	Leewards and other Antilles
1728	Leewards and other Antilles
*	added by author

The same pattern pertains with earthquakes, and only the most severe cause damage on more than one island. The best-known earthquake is that of 1690 because of

<sup>79</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-.1674* 427.

the substantial damage in Nevis and Antigua and to the residence of the Governor-in-chief. There is no evidence that the settlers' fear of earthquakes was the outcome of a single major event, but was probably due to the shallow ones so aptly described by Rev.

William Smith:

We were disturbed not a little by frequent earthquakes...During my stay in Nevis, upwards of 5 years, I felt several (at least a dozen) earthquakes, but none of them did us any further harm, than frightening us, and cracking the walls of a few boyling houses and cisterns...The loudest and fiercest...1717... bounced me out of bed , and, of course wokened me, shook the whole house which had been built all of wood except the underpinning, so as to make it crack loudly.<sup>80</sup>

## 1.6. LAND DISTRIBUTION

The availability of land drew investors, settlers and indentured servants from Europe to the Americas. The first settlers in the Leewards held land by dint of possession, but by 1627, according the Lieut. Colonel Fielding, the authority for disposal of land was the Governor<sup>81</sup>. Following the appointment of Carlisle as Lord Proprietor, the only form of landholding was a license of occupation or a patent issued by the Lord or rentee<sup>82</sup>. It was only after 1668 that fee-simple or freehold ownership came into force, which entailed the conversion of patents into grants.

At first settlement, the investor settlers, merchant financiers and their agents had seized large tracts of the most fertile acreage, for which they later obtained patents. In the manner of a conqueror, in 1624, Warner occupied the finest land in St. Christopher,

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<sup>80</sup> Rev Mr. William Smith, *A Natural History of Nevis and the rest of the English Leeward Charibee islands in America*. (Cambridge: J. Bentham, printer to the University., 1745). 61-62.

<sup>81</sup> Harlow, ed. 27.

<sup>82</sup> Akenson. 53. This was a semi-feudal system that was dying out in Stuart England.

which belonged to King Tegreman<sup>83</sup>; he cleared and planted the land even while the Caribs were housing him and his friends.<sup>84</sup> Then he proceeded to build a “ fort of pallesadoes with flankers , & loopeholes for their defence”.<sup>85</sup> Jeaffreson, his lieutenant, occupied about one thousand acres of land on the coast, which he named Godwin’s Manor; he lost that land, but acquired a comparable acreage adjacent to Warner, under patent, which his son and heir, Christopher, inherited in 1675<sup>86</sup>. The financiers Maurice Thomson and his partner, Thomas Combe, petitioned the impecunious Lord Carlisle for a patent for the 1000 acres of land that they had occupied<sup>87</sup>. Similar transactions ensued in Montserrat, where the first governor Anthony Brisket, under patent from Carlisle, held a 1000- acre tract on the leeward coast<sup>88</sup>. The early settlers set the pattern for land ownership in the Leewards that persisted for centuries:

The planter elite that emerged in the first decades of West Indian settlement, ... had engrossed all economically viable lands and dominated public institutions. ...In general, planters considered servants and freemen a potentially subversive lot who had to be controlled and kept in a laboring status for the preservation of their own social order and wealth accumulation.<sup>89</sup>

Land tenure was fragile during the entire period of this study. The proprietary regime was intended to benefit the grantor; with this in mind, Lord Carlisle established, in Barbados, a system of land leases for seven year’s or, at a maximum, the lifetime of

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<sup>83</sup> Tegreman was the king of the Caribs who had befriended Warner and the settlers. In 1626, the Europeans murdered him while he was resting in his hammock. [Harlow]

<sup>84</sup> V.T. Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, vol. Series II. LVI, Hakluyt Society (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925).2.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>86</sup> Christopher Jeaffreson and John Jeaffreson, "Debenture made 9th day of February 1675 between John Jeaffreson of High Holborn, Middlesex, deceased and Christopher Jeaffreson of the County of Westminster Esq.," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College*. (Clinton, NY: 1675).

<sup>87</sup> Sheridan. 89.

<sup>88</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* June 17, 1669. 28.

<sup>89</sup> Hilary McD Beckles, "A "riotous and unruly lot": Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713.," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series., Vol.47, no. 4 (1990).

the lessee. On one occasion, he rescinded all the patents issued two years prior.<sup>90</sup> It is not clear how the land tenure system worked in the Leewards until the change to fee simple, but the investor settlers retained their large grants into the eighteenth century. The situation that ensued after a round of hostilities exacerbated the fragility of land tenure, for when landholders returned to their properties, they found newcomers in occupation. In 1671, Gov. Wheeler had to establish a Court of Claims to deal with this issue, for, to compound matters, the registers were burnt in the war.<sup>91</sup> In 1692, this was the reason that the Council of St. Christopher passed an “Act for Quieting of the Inhabitants of the Island in their present possessions and preventing lawsuits” after the recapture of the island<sup>92</sup>. The number of leases and rental agreements that survive from the period indicate that many first generation settlers leased their lands to newcomers and retired to England on the proceeds.

In an effort to increase settlement and to build a substantial population and local militia, authorities began the practice of apportioning ten acres to “labouring men”; it was ten acres because this was the minimum size farm with the legal requirement to employ one white servant<sup>93</sup>. The intention did not encompass the viability of the land, for as late as 1714, a commentator recommended that, when distributing the former French lands of St. Christopher, “the poorer sort of Inhabitants may have some parcels of the worst land

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<sup>90</sup> Michael Craton, "Property and Propriety. Land tenure and slave property in the creation of a British West indian plantocracy, 1612-1740," in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves, *Consumption and Culture in the 17th and 18th centuries*. (New York: Routledge, 1995). 503.

<sup>91</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* 274. 658. William. 1st bart. Stapleton, "Answer to the Council for Plantations from His Excellency William Stapleton, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's Leeward islands in America.," in *Stapleton Family Papers*. (Manchester, UK: John Ryland University Library of Manchester, 1672).

<sup>92</sup> Council of Antigua., "Laws of the Leeward Islands past at several assemblies of the said island from 1680 to 1692: And approved by His Majesty in Council," in *Colonial State Papers*. (London: national Archives of Britain., 1680-1692).

<sup>93</sup> Watts. 149.

near the Seaside given them gratis, not above ten acres, to the most numerous family”.<sup>94</sup>

The system ensured that the small settlers got the poorest lands.

## 1.7 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In the 1640's, Dutch traders and planters introduced sugar cane cultivation to Barbados, the Leeward Islands and French colonies.<sup>95</sup> This came soon after the English and French governors had banned tobacco cultivation because of a glut in European markets. The Dutch needed a new source of sugar to compensate for the loss of the Portuguese sugar-producing provinces of Pernambuco and Bahia, from which they were ejected in 1644. The Dutch traders provided sugar cane plants, technology and low interest loans to large landowners for the purchase of equipment and African labor. At that time, the Dutch supplied all these items.

The introduction of sugar cane cultivation was the turning point in the history of the Leewards. The planters developed an efficient industry through adaptation of Brazilian techniques and successfully challenged Brazil, with its extensive lands and resources, on several fronts. To crush the cane, the Barbadians developed windmills to benefit from the winds that sweep across the islands; David De Marcato, the probable designer of the windmill, was a Sephardim, formerly of Pernambuco. Francis Lord

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<sup>94</sup> Guilford et al., "Report from the Commission of Trade about the settling of the French part of St. Christopher's," in *Colonial State Papers of Britain* (London: 1714).

<sup>95</sup> Prince Maurits of Nassau administered the provinces of Pernambuco and Bahia for the Dutch West India Company. This venture failed after his departure and many Dutch nationals, some of whom were Sephardim, introduced sugar cane plants, cultivation and technology into Barbados – the island nearest to the mainland. In the 1640's it was Colonel Drax of Barbados who first experimented with sugar cane production. The plants and technology were introduced to the other English and the French islands by 1649. French authorities state that sugar cultivation was introduced to the Leewards in 1643.

Willoughby registered the patent in London in 1663.<sup>96</sup> Contemporary maps and official reports show that by the late 1670's wooden windmills were crushing cane on the larger estates of Antigua, Nevis and Montserrat. Since the timber stands on the islands could not provide adequate fuel for the furnaces, the planters turned to recycling the cane trash or bagasse for fuel. They dried the cane trash in the sun and then stored it in large, open sided sheds.<sup>97</sup> In addition, the planters capitalized on the by-products of sugar production, molasses and rum, by finding markets for them in the North American colonies. The British islands also benefited from the lower shipping costs to Europe from the West Indies.

Sugar production not only enriched the individual planter, but also generated a network of business activities and industries on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1674, Fernando Gorges, Lord Proprietor of Maine and Barbados Agent, addressed the Council for Trade and Plantations of Britain, summarizing the significance of the West Indies trade to the economy of Britain:

Plantations on the continent of America or large islands which swallow up great numbers of people, are doubtless rather injurious than profitable to this kingdom. But with Barbados and the Caribby Islands it is otherwise, Barbados being managed with 5,000 English, who have purchased 70,000 negroes, and are supplied with a great part of their provisions and all their clothing, household stuff, horses, &c, from England, to the value of 300,000*l* per annum; these few English employ 200 ships yearly, with 6,000 seamen and the other islands proportionable, and bring home a native commodity to England of 600,000*l* per annum, great part whereof is yearly exported, and is

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<sup>96</sup> David De Marcato and Francis Lord Willoughby, "Willoughby, Hyde and De Marcato's Patent " in *The British Patent Office.*, ed. The King (England: Willoughby, Hyde and De Marcato, A.D. 1663). The economic importance of the innovation for "makeinge and frameinge of sugar mill after a newe manner"<sup>96</sup> is evident from the names of the two other assignees: Lawrence Hyde, the brother of James II's queen, and Francis, Lord Willoughby of Parham. [Appendix A.]

<sup>97</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8). Folio 31.

no small help to the balance of trade of the nation. Upon the sugar plantations chiefly depends the Guinea trade also...<sup>98</sup>

The concentration on sugar cultivation on the small landmasses precluded the development of other industries. Thus, foodstuffs and manufactured products had to be imported. Indeed, in 1670, Parliament even reserved the refinement of sugar for Britain and laid heavy customs duties on sugar imported to Britain in the refined state; thereafter, the planters shipped sugar to England in the wasteful, wet state of *muscovados*.<sup>99</sup>

The trade figures of England and Wales during the eighteenth century illustrate the pivotal economic contribution of the sugar trade of the islands. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British West Indies were the greatest source of imports to Britain.<sup>100</sup> Of relevance to the architecture was the planters' importation of the latest in furniture, clothing and fittings from Britain. In relation to exports and re-exports of manufactured goods, glassware, earthenware, wrought iron and luxury items, the British West Indies, with their small population, were among the four or five major destinations<sup>101</sup>. [Table 1.4].

The complementary nature of the products of the North American colonies and those of the West Indies generated considerable trade between the two regions. The colonies north of Virginia produced few staples of value to European markets, but these were in short supply in the Leewards. Lord Cornbury wrote to Sir Charles Hedges in 1705 that "The trade of this province [New York] consists chiefly in flower and Biskett which is sent the islands of the West Indies, in return they bring rum, sugar, molasses and

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<sup>98</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-.1674*. 565.

<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* Xxx. Note: this Act was intended to assist the sugar refining establishments in England.

<sup>100</sup> Elizabeth Boody Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics. 1697-1808*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960). 18.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* 17.



sometimes pieces of eight and cocoa and logwood...”.<sup>102</sup> By the late seventeenth century, ships from North America bound for the West Indies carried salted fish from Newfoundland and Boston to feed the slaves, flour from New York, and, hams and butter from Pennsylvania. In addition to the foodstuff, were furniture and the staves of wood from New England and the Carolinas for making the wooden casks in which the sugar, molasses and rum were shipped, as well as construction lumber.<sup>103</sup> The return cargoes to North America were rum and molasses for the distilleries of New England. This trade stimulated industries in North American ports for building, outfitting and maintaining ships.

While the large planters and merchants grew rich, the small farmers and tradesmen on the islands subsisted on piecework, cash crops of cotton, indigo or limejuice, and by producing yams and cassava bread for the slaves. It is hardly surprising that time-expired servants migrated in numbers to Jamaica and the North American colonies.

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<sup>102</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Colonial Series. America and the West Indies. (1706-1708)* (London: HMSO). July 15, 1705. #1250.

<sup>103</sup> Richard Pares, *Yankees and Creoles* (Archon Books, 1968; reprint, with permission of Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd).

**Table 1.4. Trade Statistics compiled from E.Schumpeter's *English Overseas Trade Statistics 1697-1808*. (1960).**

**a. Average annual trade statistics of England with the new markets of the Americas, Africa & Asia**

	East Indies	Future USA	British West Indies
Imports in 1700	£500,000	£250,000	£600,000
Imports in 1800	£5,000,000	£1,500,000	£5,900,000
Exports in 1700	£100,000	£250,000	£305,000
Exports in 1800	£2,200,000	£2,100,000	£4,400,000

**b. London's percentage share in the total commerce of England and Wales at ten-year intervals:**

	Imports	Export of English produce and manufactures	Re-exports
1700	80	69	86
1710	72	71	80
1720	81	66	85
1730	80	69	83

**c. English Exports through London to the Americas, Africa & Asia**

		Africa & East Indies			Total	Units
Year	Commodity	Indies	Future USA	British West Indies		
1700	wrought	597	24	822	1,636	cwts.
1710	copper	116	10	453	1,029	
1720		111	25	975	1,180	
1730		199	103	2,194	3,451	

		Africa & East Indies			Total	Units
Year	Commodity	Indies	Future USA	British West Indies		
1700	glass &	93,121	93,166	114,174	758,975	pieces
1710	earthenware	103,487	214,818	603,412	2,340,868	
1720		155,329	331,999	558,220	3,412,506	
1730		198,770	444,036	722,006	3,835,220	

		Africa & East Indies			Total	Units
Year	Commodity	Indies	Future USA	British West Indies		
1700	wrought iron	3,570	4,797	6,826	21,693	cwts.
1710		3,201	4,666	4,898	19,340	
1720		2,903	4,600	6,612	25,665	
1730		6,809	9,453	10,769	42,013	

		Africa & East Indies			Total	Units
Year	Commodity	Indies	Future USA	British West Indies		
1700	linen	229	2,550	1,418	4,581	pieces
1710		231	4,775	2,935	8,223	
1720		289	5,465	5,229	11,339	
1730		629	7,886	10,741	20,745	

		Africa & East Indies			Total	Units
Year	Commodity	Indies	Future USA	British West Indies		
1700	wrought silk	102	5,573	8,771	38,353	lb.
1710		53	14,441	11,074	53,897	
1720		272	6,791	9,188	40,521	
1730		363	11,090	8,685	57,742	

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## **CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE RELATING TO THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS: 1624-1727.**

This chapter seeks to bring together existing knowledge about the architecture and landscapes of the Leeward Islands in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to serve as a foundation of the study. For this reason, it includes contemporary material. The review draws on several sources: contemporary travelogues in English and French, discourse on cultural issues in the wider Caribbean colonial region and recent studies by visiting archaeologists and geographers. A short section on popular architectural histories of the Caribbean points to the ‘silence’ about the pre-Georgian architecture of the British in the Leewards.

### **2.1 CONTEMPORARY TRAVELOGUES.**

French priests and officials who visited the French Caribbean territories in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries described the architecture of the settlements in some detail; unfortunately, there are no British parallels on the Leewards. British travelers to the Leewards displayed a different attitude from that of the French, concentrating on the natural environment, sugar production and the exotic; none of them thought to describe the architecture. Their brief comments about buildings were tangential to other events. The one British sojourner who discussed settlers’ houses in

some detail was Richard Ligon<sup>1</sup> (1650). His work is about Barbados, but the book does provide valuable data for comparisons.

In the late sixteenth century, Carib houses had earth-fast structures made of forked tree-trunks planted in the ground, and the houses were either oval or rectangular, according to the carefully drawn and painted watercolors of the *Histoire Naturelle des Indes: the Drake Manuscript* (1996)<sup>2</sup>. However, the majority of the images are about the flora and fauna of the islands. Linguistic scholars have assigned a date to the anonymous manuscript on the basis of its old French text. According to tradition, a sailor made the paintings during one of Sir Francis Drake's voyages in the Caribbean. Thus, some of the illustrations could depict places on St. Christopher where Sir Francis Drake landed in 1585 to clean his ships and restore the health of his sick sailors.<sup>3</sup>

The gable-ended rectangular houses were long, narrow and just wide enough to hang a hammock. They had two or three bays, the central one for cooking, with a sleeping area at one end and another sleeping or meeting space at the other end. [Figure 2.1]. There is something strange about the size of cooking facilities within the thatched structure, and the large cauldron on a fire. It is possible that the Caribs could make such large clay pots, but it resembles a European iron pot. The lack of sides or walls for weather protection is inconsistent with vernacular buildings. Clearly, one of the great

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes illustrated with a map of the island as also the Principal Trees and Plants there, Set forth in their due proportions and Shapes, drawn out by their several and respective Scales.*, New Imprint of Second Edition (1970) ed., 1 vols., Cass Library of West Indian Studies No. 11 (London & Edinburgh: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1673, 1970).

<sup>2</sup> unknown, *Histoire Naturelle des Indes. The Drake Manuscript in the Pierpont Morgan Library.*, trans. Ruth S. Kraemer (New York and London.: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Henry Watkins, I.S.O., *Handbook of the Leeward Islands.* (London: The West India Committee, 1924). 3.

benefits of this type of structure was the ease of rebuilding after a hurricane because the framework would have remained in place even after the thatching had blown away. Even after a fire, the main structure could be intact if it were of a dense hardwood. It is curious that the painter does not depict the large *carbets* and the clustered family settlements visited by the French authors, Pères du Tertre and Labat in the late seventeenth century.

The *Drake Manuscript* is accepted as a source of visual information about the Carib regions prior to European settlement, but it is anonymous and undated. The guns carried by the men in the images confirm that the images are representations of living conditions on the islands after first contact with Europeans, or are a European's understanding of how the Caribs lived.



Figure. 2.1. Detail of Folio 124 of the *Drake Manuscript* showing a three room Carib dwelling. [Kramer, ed. *Histoire Naturelle des Indes. The Drake Manuscript in the Pierpoint Morgan Library.*]

There is no record in the Leeward Islands of the wanton devastation of the timber stands seen by Sir Henry Colt on arrival in 1631 at Barbados, which he said looked “like



ye ruines of some village lately burned, - heer a great timber tree half burned, in an other place a rafter singed all black”<sup>4</sup>. Indeed, Sir Henry noted on arrival in St. Christopher that “ye woods are thick and mountainous and hills manye” and that settlement on Nevis was dispersed when he noted that “the houses and familyes of ye Ilanders standing farr of one from ye other”<sup>5</sup>. Colt’s letter describes the settlers’ living conditions and the rapidity with which the landowning, investor-settlers established a European quality lifestyle. He mentioned that some houses were built of wood, complained about lazy servants, and told of his outing with Warner when one day, “Ye governor being withe me in ye morninge, we dyned together at Captaine Pelham’s.”<sup>6</sup> However, Colt did not compare Captain Pelham’s establishment with Mr. Futter’s in Barbados:

Wher I supped...shewes to be ye best husband in all ye rest in his prouision both at home, in his house & in ye field. In his house to supper of his owne, we had piggs, capons, Turkeys, chickens”<sup>7</sup>.

He recorded the conflicting imperatives in the process of starting a new estate or property:

I to a house & land I haue bought at Palmito Point neerer by two miles wher ye Indians landed & neerer to ye French then my tent.... I left of buyldinge, & all my men weer ther busied at work in cleering of grownd for peace, potatoes and wheat.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Henry Colt, "The Voyage of Sir Henry Colt, written at St. Kitts of a voyage begun 22 May 1631 giving descriptions of St. Kitts and Barbados, details of an attack by a Spanish fleet and advice to son to undertake a similar voyage.," in *Colonising expeditions of the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1631). .86

<sup>5</sup> Ibid..86

<sup>6</sup> ibid., "The Voyage of Sir Henry Colt," in *Colonising expeditions of the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1631). 97

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 75-76

<sup>8</sup> Colt, "The voyage of Sir Henry Colt.." 97.

In the 1650's in Barbados, the majority of Europeans lived in low, single gabled structures, wrote Richard Ligon, who added that the houses were hot and poorly ventilated. This surprised him because it was already ten years after the increase in affluence brought on by sugar cane cultivation, but he found that the settlers preferred to put their resources into farming endeavors. Ligon was a draftsman or architect of some sort and it was, he claimed, due to his encouragement that a few affluent persons built double gabled houses with windows. In the slim volume, *A True and Exact History of Barbados* (1673)<sup>9</sup>, Ligon provided a detailed record of the lifestyle and concerns of the Barbadian settlers. He included sketches of a cattle mill and processing works and wrote of the rapid turnover of estates and the clay-lined ponds made in declivities in the ground to collect surface water.

In the pattern repeated by other British and French and British writers, Ligon wrote at length about the timber, flora, fauna and fish. He claimed that cedar was the best wood for building as it was strong, durable, and relatively light. He added that because of its smooth grain, the settlers greatly admired it and used large quantities for wainscot and furniture. This, incidentally, suggests that some houses had high quality finishes. Ligon identified the palmetto leaves as making a very fine kind of thatch that dried quickly, was long- lasting and, as the underside of a roof, very pleasing in appearance. The bully tree timber was excellent and durable. The lignum vitae and ironwood, he noted, were exceedingly hard and suitable for making small objects; traders shipped these raw materials to Europe for making furniture.

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<sup>9</sup> Ligon.

In common with the writings of other Englishmen who visited the Leeward Islands and left records about their travels, the published selection of Christopher Jeaffreson's letters<sup>10</sup> does not mention buildings except in association with another event. Nearly 200 years after his sojourn, some of Jeaffreson's letters from St. Christopher were selected and published by a distant relative who was a playwright/novelist. The tone of the letters is peevish and unhappy about the conditions he encountered in establishing a sugar estate and merchant trade in the 1670's and 1680's. Some authors accept that Jeaffreson's comments about the weak market for his fine linen and Smyrna carpets indicate a mean lifestyle on the islands. About the need for skilled tradesmen, he told "a carpenter or two and one or two mason, they will be very serviceable, if they bring their tools with them...and a joiner. Suche servants are as golde in these parts"<sup>11</sup>. Jeaffreson's experiences during the two hurricanes of 1681 suggest that the construction techniques he used were not appropriate to the environment:

As soon as the storm began to cease [on Saturday, 27 August 1681] I went up to my house which I found miserably torne and flat with the ground. My sugar-worke, in like manner, and all my buildings....I walked down to my sugar-worke which I had built not long before...I found that likewise flatt with the ground – the stone wall overturned....I stood for shelter behind that part of the wall of my house, which was left standing.<sup>12</sup>

Jeaffreson returned to reside in England in 1682/3 after repairing the roof of his house.

In the introduction to the letters, Cordy Jeaffreson intimated that Christopher was "querulous" and did not recognize that, as editor in 1878, he may have selected the most

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<sup>10</sup> John Cordy Jeaffreson, author of "A Book About Doctors", "Brides and Bridals" etc, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century from Papers (AD 1676-1686)* (London: Hurst and Blackett, Publishers., 1878).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.186.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 274-277.

petulant letters that were in keeping with the negative sentiments, which the fight for the abolition of slavery had generated towards the West Indies.<sup>13</sup> The published volume reports on only some personal letters left by Christopher Jeaffreson. There is a collection of his business correspondence in the Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection at Hamilton College, New York State.

In the 1680's, a British traveler wrote the frequently repeated description of the earth-fast structure of Spanish houses in Jamaica; however, he said very little about the houses of the Leewards. Like other writers of the period, Dr. Hans Sloane demonstrates in *A Voyage to the islands of Madera, Barbados, Nieves, St. Christopher's and Jamaica*<sup>14</sup> (1707-1725) that he was fascinated by the curiosities of the West Indies. He mentions the large stone cisterns in which Nevisians collected rainwater, but not the buildings surrounding them. He wrote of the superior performance during earthquakes of the Spanish houses of Jamaica due to their construction compared with the new British ones:

Earthquakes...one happened on Sunday 19 February 1688 about 8 in the morning. I found in a Chamber one story high the Cabinets and several other Moveables on the floor to reel....and the danger being in a high Brick house, I made what haste I could to get out....some houses therein being cracked, others uncovered of their tiles. The Spaniards who inhabited this island and those neighboring built their houses very low and they consisted only of ground rooms, their walls being made of posts which were as much buried

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<sup>13</sup> Note: Sentiments about the islands may have been similar to those of a visitor to the Virgin Islands just prior to abolition who wrote "I was going to the West Indies!!! What an exuberance of associations sprung up before me: plague, pestilence and famine stared me in the face...the nursery tales of my youth, and all I had heard of kidnapping blacks to make sugar, and scourging them with cart-whips for pastime...I had long since been taught to dislike sugar". [anonymous, *The West India Sketch Book*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (London: Printed for Whittaker & Co., 1834). 7]

<sup>14</sup> Sir Hans Sloane, *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the herbs and trees, four-footed beasts, fish, reptiles, &c of the last of those islands; to which is prefixed an introduction, wherein is an account of the inhabitants, air, waters, diseases, trade, &c. of that place, with some relations concerning the neighbouring continent, and islands of America. Illustrated with figures of the things described, which have not been heretofore engraved; in large copperplate - big as the life*, 2 vols. (London: Printed by B.M. for the author, 1707-1725).

under ground as they stood above, on purpose to avoid the danger which attended other manner of building from earthquakes.<sup>15</sup>

He clearly admired the Spanish houses, which were, “usually one story high having a Porch, parlor and at each end a Room, with small ones behind for closets etc....the lowness as well as fixing the posts deep in the Earth was for fear their houses should be ruined by earthquakes as well as for coolness”.<sup>16</sup>

Not one of the British residents Richard Blome, Rev. William Smith or John Oldmixon, provided a detailed report about the architecture of the Leewards, despite offering additional insights and information about the settlements, and on what struck them as fantastic about the new environment. In the mid-seventeenth century, the French buildings fascinated Blome, and he wrote more about the French town of Basseterre than about the English towns, because the former were “more populous”. He wrote that the French town was “of a good bigness, whose houses are well built of Brick, Freestone and Timber”, then he continued about the “stately Castle of the governor, most pleasantly seated at the foot of a high Mountain, not far from the sea, having spacious courts, delightful walks and Gardens and enjoying a curious prospect”.<sup>17</sup> Smith left graphic descriptions of the intermittent earthquakes, water storage ponds, fishing expeditions with the Sephardic Shlomo Israel and his walks through pleasant “gardens” in his *A Natural*

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. vol 1.xliv.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. vol.1.xlvii

<sup>17</sup> Richard Blome, *A Description of the Island of Jamaica with the other islands and territories in America to which the English are related viz. Barbados, St. Christophers, Nieves or Nevis, St. Vincent, Dominica, Montserrat, Barbada*. (London: by J.B. for Dorman Newman .at the King's Arms in the Poulteney, 1678; reprint, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan.). 42-44.

*History of Nevis and the rest of the English Charribee Islands* (1745).<sup>18</sup> It is clear that he enjoyed a pleasant life on the islands in the early eighteenth century. Smith's most significant contribution to this study of architecture was his clear statement that only the wealthy could afford to purchase the hardwood posts necessary for the earth-fast posts in their houses. He remarked that the houses were of timber and that the sugar works were of stonework – where necessary. However, in this collection of letters he never describes or sketches the buildings. Once again, it was in reference to the earthquakes that in the *British Empire in America* (1741) John Oldmixon, a public official in Montserrat, wrote of the buildings and cisterns of Nevis. He told of the collapse of stone and brick buildings in Nevis during the 1690 earthquake, of the timber structures that shook and stood, and of water thrown ten feet into the air from cisterns in the shock of the earthquake.<sup>19</sup>

French authors described the architecture of their colonies. However, one should not assume that what obtains in the French areas automatically maps to the British, for the two nations retained their national characteristics. It appears that they lived distinctly separate existences that were more connected with the mother country than with their neighbors. In 1658, César de Rochefort observed that the architecture of the two nations'

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<sup>18</sup> Rev Mr. William Smith, *A Natural History of Nevis and the rest of the English Leeward Charibee islands in America*. (Cambridge: J. Bentham, printer to the University., 1745).

<sup>19</sup> John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America. Containing the History of the Discovery, Settlement, Progress and State of the British Colonies on the Continent and Islands of America.*, Second Edition, Corrected and Amended 1741/ with the continuation of the history and the variation in the state and trade of those colonies, from the year 1710 to the present time; including remarks, and the most feasible and useful methods for their improvement and security. ed., 2 vols., vol. II, Reprints of economic classics. (New York: Augustus M. Kelley. Publishers, 1741; reprint, 1969). Vol11. 253.

colonies was different, in his *Histoire Naturelle And Morale Des Iles Antilles De l'Amerique* (1666):

in all the islands where the nations are better settled and accommodated, there are many fine houses of timber, stone and brick, built after the same manner as those in their own countries save that for the most part they are but one or two stories high at the most".<sup>20</sup>

Another French traveler, Père Labat (ca 1700) noted the evidence of the English taste in the number of glass windows in Bridgetown, Barbados, where "*les maisons sont bien bâties dans le goût de celles d'Angleterre, avec beaucoup de fenetres vitrées, elles sont meublées magnifiquement*".<sup>21</sup> [The houses are well built in the English manner with lots of glass windows, they are beautifully furnished.]

Compared with other French travelogs of the period, Cesar de Rochefort's work is one of the shortest, but it is well known in the translation for his description of the first houses of the settlers:

At the first coming of the foreign nations into the Islands, they were lodg'd much after the same manner as the natural inhabitants of the country, in little cotts and hutts made of the wood they fell'd upon the place as they clear'd the ground.... these weak structures, which are sustained only by four or six forks planted in the ground, and instead of walls are encompass'd and palizado'd only with reeds, and covered with palm or plaintaine leaves, sugar-canes or some such material.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Cesar de Rochefort, "*Histoire naturelle et morale des Iles Antilles de l'Amerique*" - "*The history of the caribby Islands viz Barbadoes, St. Christophers, St. Vincents, Martinico, Dominico, Barbouthos, Montserrat, Nevis, Antigo, etc in all XXV111---*With a Caribbean -vocabulary.", trans. John of Kidwelley Davies, English. ed. (London:: printed by J.M. for Thomas Dring and John Starkey and are to be sold at their shop... 1666). 177.

<sup>21</sup> R.P. Labat, *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles del'Amerique contenant l'Histoire naturelle de ces pays, l'Origine, les Moeurs, la religion et le Gouvernement des habitans anciens et modernes.*, 4 vols. (Paris.: Ch. J.B. Delespine, Imp. Lib. ord.du Roy, a la Victoire et au Palmier., 1742; reprint, 1972. Editions des Horizons Caraibes, Fort-de-France,Martinique.). Vol.3. 270.

<sup>22</sup> Rochefort. 177.

In his comments about the landscape of the Leewards, de Rochefort said that the most outstanding British buildings in St. Christopher, “the chiefest” island, were those of the late Governor Thomas Warner and Colonel Jeaffreson.<sup>23</sup> In Montserrat, he found that the “very fair church” was the finest structure. He wrote about the dispersed settlement, particularly in Nevis, where “the plantations are all about the mountain beginning from the seaside till you come to the highest point of it”; however, he thought this arrangement quite practical:

There is indeed a certain necessity for the greater convenience of all the Inhabitants, and easier managing of their employments, that their houses should be distinct one from another and placed in that piece of ground that they manure.<sup>24</sup>

It has to be said that there is a certain ‘sameness’ about the descriptions and organization of the travelogs, which indicates that the content was not always original; this is pronounced in the discussions of the local woods and their applications. The names of the timber vary from author to author and between the languages and islands, but it is evident that the settlers had learned the lore of tropical woods, and who else, but the Indians could have taught them?

The late seventeenth century Carib settlements described by Pères du Tertre and Labat included a number of large structures of a type that were not shown in the Drake manuscript. During his evangelizing activities, Père du Tertre spent time in the Carib settlements in Guadeloupe, where the people lived in small family groups. The houses of married children surrounded the father’s. The houses, according to the text, were single-

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 23.



story, divided into two or three chambers that were a dining room, a sleeping room and a third was for receiving guests. Some houses did have a small additional room where the household kept their valuables. Du Tertre's descriptions of individual houses indicate spatial arrangements that differed marginally from the smaller houses of North-west Europe. In addition to the small dwellings, he continued, there were large, oval, communal buildings, called *carbets*, which were between 60 and 80 feet long. The Caribs constructed the *carbets* starting with forked branches, 18 to 20 foot long, which they planted in the ground with a ridgepole of a long, straight tree trunk, of *latanier* wood, laid across the top. They leant one end of the rafters to the ridgepole with the other end on the ground; thatch covered the structure.<sup>25</sup>

The French settlers had several types of houses, wrote du Tertre. Those of the soldiers [the militia perhaps] and rich inhabitants were timber structures, boarded with planks and covered with tiles. The houses had two stories, and the ground floor *Salle* or hall had a brick floor. The Dutch traders supplied the settlers with construction materials like tiles and bricks, which they used to *lester* or stabilize their ships on the outward Atlantic crossing. In addition, there were local lime and clay deposits available for brick making. The houses of modest persons, on the other hand, were generally single-storied, of two or three rooms. In places where there was no threat from the Caribs, the walls

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<sup>25</sup> Jean Baptiste de l'Ordre des FF. Precheurs du Tertre, *Histoire generale des Antilles habitee par les Francois.*, Reedition executee d'apres l'edition de Th. Jolly de 1667-71 ed., 4 vols. (Fort-de-France, Martinique: Editions des Horizons Caraibes, 1973). v.2 p 372-376

were made of vertical reeds. He mentioned that the ordinary buildings were low because of the threat of violent winds and hurricanes.<sup>26</sup>

Du Tertre's account of the hostilities of 1666 between the British and French in S. Christophe includes an illustration of the *Combat de la Pointe de Sable*, which shows a number of houses and outbuildings on Captain L'Esperance's estate.<sup>27</sup> [Figure 2.2] This is one of the earliest images of houses in the Leewards, but it is of the French. One has to wonder why scholars have ignored the distinctly medieval structures, but expressed great interest in the image of the Guadeloupean sugar works and estate house. Is it because the narrow, 1 ½-story house does not fit the concept of the planter's house, which is of a more elaborate or classically influenced building? The etching of the main house on the Esperance property has a line dividing a basement from the upper floor and garret, which suggests a difference in materials, perhaps wood and masonry, or a change in wall thickness. The house is one room deep, nearly three times as long as wide. The high gable-end window implies that the settlers used the garret for sleeping.

Another publicized image from du Tertre's tomes is that of the chateau de Poincy, which, in contrast with the farmhouse, is consistent with notions of colonial splendor. The etching depicts a large complex with slave and servant housing, terracing, a geometric garden and a water fountain. [Figure 2.3]. The surviving remains of the chateau's upper terrace walls, a pond and the grotto in fieldstone and brick at Fountain

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<sup>26</sup> Jean-Baptiste du Tertre de l'Ordre des FF. Precheurs *Histoire generale des Antilles habitee par les Francois.*, Reedition executee d'apres l'edition de Th. Jolly de 1667-71 ed., 4 vols. (Fort de France, Martinique: Editions des Horizons Caraibes., 1973). 424-425.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

Estate attest to the accuracy of the image and the availability of competent masonry techniques in 1640, within the first 20 years of European settlement.<sup>28</sup> [Figure 2.4].

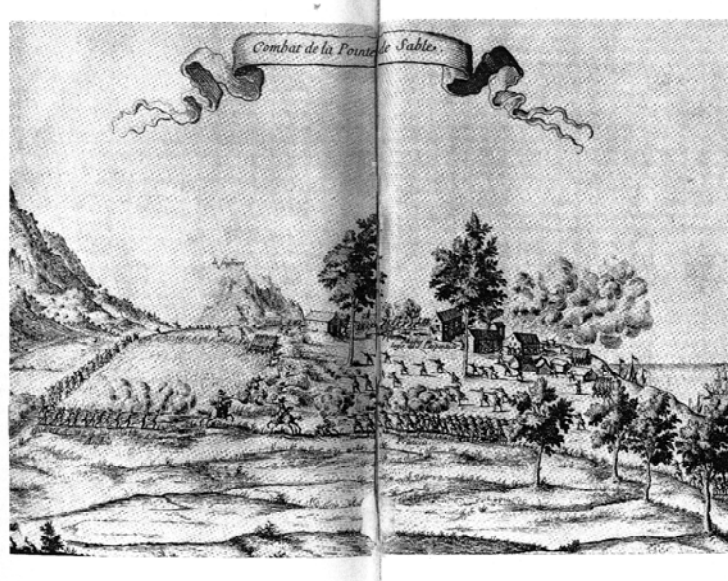


Figure 2.2. Detail of the *Combat de la Pointe de Sable*. S. Christophe, showing the L'Esperance Estate. [du Tertre. *Hiistoire generale des Antilles habitées par les Francois*].



Figure 2.3. Phillipe de Poincy's Chateau in St. Christopher's. [du Tertre. *Hiistoire generale des Antilles habitées par les Francois*].

<sup>28</sup> Note: It is generally held that the tower collapsed in the 1689/90 spate of earthquakes; what is certain is that in 1671, Governor Charles Wheeler mentioned that the chateau was still standing.



Figure 2.4. The upper level staircase to the garden of de Poincy's chateau, Fountain, St. Kitts showing some remedial work under the stair treads. (2006).[Hobson]

In contrast to the Spanish colonies, whose cities had stone buildings and civic institutions, in the mid-1600s, the only non-Iberian island with towns was Barbados, which had two. Du Tertre found it strange that, in the French and British Caribbean, the so-called towns “*n’y a portes n’y murailles*” [had neither gates nor walls] and that the churches were simple structures:

*Les Eglises n’ont rien qui approche de celles de France, elles ont quinze à seize toises de longueur, & trois ou quatre de hauteur. Jusqu’à trois ou quatre pieds hors de terre, les murailles sont de Pierre de taile ou de moëllon: le reste aussi bien que le comble est de Charpenterie; & toute la clôture est à iour pour y donner de l’air.*<sup>29</sup>

[The churches are not comparable to those in France, they are fifteen or sixteen measures long, and three or four in height. About three or four feet above ground level, the walls are of stone either dressed or small ones; the rest of the walls including the roof are of timber construction; and all the siding is pierced/ has openings to allow the air to pass.]

<sup>29</sup> du Tertre de l'Ordre des FF. Precheurs 423 -4.

The structure of the churches with stone base walls and wood above is consistent with the appearance of the L'Esperance houses; the pierced siding was an effort to increase air movement. In addition, du Tertre commented that typically there were no chimneys or glass windows in the houses, which was not because of the fragility of the glass, but because they were of a type that could not be opened for ventilation:

*Je n'ay veu des vitres qu'aux fenestres des maisons des Gouverneurs....l'usage en est incommode, à cause des chaleurs du pays, où l'on est obligé de tenir tousiours la portes et les fenestres ouvertes pour donner passage à la brize, afin de rafraischir la Case: que l'on ferme la nuit.*<sup>30</sup>

[I have only seen glass in the window openings of the governors' houses....their use is not practical because of the hot climate of the country, for one is obliged to keep the doors and windows open to allow for breezes, with the intention of cooling the house; one only closes them at night.]

The type of glass window he referred to as *vitres* may have been a medieval type of fixed panel with small glass panes; clearly, they were not opening or casement type. The chimneys and glass windows in the governors' houses on several islands were, du Tertre believed, more for ornamentation than necessity; nevertheless, the practice was appropriate in order for their external appearance to conform to buildings of similar status in France. In fact, he thought that de Poincy's three story house in S. Christophe had established a standard for the other islands.

Du Tertre's detailed discussion of local woods confirms that the lore originated with the Caribs and that durability in moist conditions was an important characteristic. An example is in the section of the book on *Des bois à bastir*, wood for construction,

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 425.

where he relates that *du bois d'Inde*, an aromatic laurel, grew to a large size in wet areas, and the leaves were in use by settlers and Indians in all their sauces. This was the hardest and heaviest of all the local woods. It took a polish and did not rot. The *frank acoma* with its beautiful yellow color was the best for all types of construction. Unfortunately, the color faded over time, but the timber was suitable for burying in the soil:

*on remarque que fort longtemps après ester coupe le coeur en est aussi sain, humide, & plein de séve, que si on le venoit de mettre par terre.*<sup>31</sup>  
[people have noted that for a long time after being cut down, the heartwood remains clean, moist and full of sap, just as if it had been cut recently].

Another construction wood was what the Dutch and British called cedar, *l'Acajou rouge*, which grew like the chestnut and resisted worm attack even in moist situations, which made it suitable for roof shingles:

*Le ver n'y done jamais, il resiste mesme long tēps dans l'eau sans se pourrir: d'où vient qu'on en fait de l'essēse ou bardeau, pour couvrir les maisons, au lieu de tūiles.*<sup>32</sup>  
[Worms never attack it, it does not rot even after long periods in water: which is why it is used to make small pieces of wood or shingles, for roofing of houses in place of tiles....]

Forty years later, Père Labat in *Nouveau Voyage aux Iles de l'Amerique* (1742)<sup>33</sup> expanded on du Tertre's information. He remarked that the French in S. Christophe were aristocratic, Perhaps he assumed the British were of the same class because when he visited St. Christophe in 1702, and wondered at the simplicity of the two British churches there that were only about forty feet long and eighteen to twenty wide<sup>34</sup>. He noted that the French buildings of Basseterre quarter, though damaged by the British in the

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 149.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.150.

<sup>33</sup> Labat.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 20.

hostilities of ten years before, were of masonry construction. In both Guadeloupe and S. Christophe, there were lime-burning and brick-making works so that it is no surprise that by the early eighteenth century he noticed a trend towards building masonry houses.

## 2.2 CULTURAL ISSUES IN EARLY COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE AMERICAS.

In the 1970's, scholars in the United States of America expressed a new interest in vernacular studies and material culture<sup>35</sup>. They published studies on early colonial housing and queried the introduction of building practices from previously unsuspected cultures in the greater Caribbean region. Scholars began to consider the linkages between the architecture of Africa, the Iberian Peninsula, the West Indies and mainland North America. Peoples from several cultures inhabited this region connected by the Caribbean Sea. Hence the issues of syncretism and cultural diffusion, impermanence and adaptation between 1500 and 1800 underlie and complicate research in this field, which is particularly difficult for those colonies where there are few buildings surviving from the period.

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<sup>35</sup> Dell Upton, "The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture," *American Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (1983).

### 2.2.1 Syncretism and Cultural Diffusion.

The Caribbean is the recipient of “far-flung influences”<sup>36</sup> or building traditions from various countries, and some authors write of the Caribbean, or parts thereof, as a “cultural hearth,” where traditions from several cultures are fused and then transmitted by migrants and traders to other regions. This may account for the phenomenon in the domestic architecture of the British and French colonies of features like detached kitchens, earth fast construction, verandahs and galleries, which are not typical of the north-west European countries where the dominant classes originated. The issue of contention is the context of the time, what the traditional housing arrangements were in the countries of origin of the peoples of the region.

In 1994, Philippe Oszuscik wrote about the introduction of the gallery as an architectural element to the southern areas of North America. He suggested that “the mystery...of the seeming simultaneous appearance of the Tidewater cottage in the Carolinas, British West Florida, and Gulf Coast” would appear to be a logical and inevitable development if one recognizes the connection of these far apart locations with the Caribbean hearth.<sup>37</sup> An even more distant provenance is the arrangement of Italian Renaissance and Venetian palaces that Jay D. Edwards discerned in the plan and geometry of Diego Colon’s ‘Casa Del Almirante’ in Santo Domingo of the first decade of the sixteenth-century.<sup>38</sup> He suggests in *Open Issues in the Study of Caribbean*

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<sup>36</sup> Jay D. Edwards, “Open issues in the Study of the Historic Influences of Caribbean Architecture on that of North America.,” *Material Culture* 37, no. 1 (2005).

<sup>37</sup> Phillipe Oszuscik, “Comparisons Between Rural and Urban French Creole Housing.,” *Material Culture* 26, no. 3 (1992).

<sup>38</sup> Edwards.



*Architecture on that of North America* that this tripartite arrangement influenced the floor plans of thousands of houses of the Spanish and others around the Caribbean. An underlying intention of these studies, whether conscious or not, is to recognize the contributions and inputs from peoples other than the North-west Europeans.

A major determinant of house form in buildings not designed by academic architects is the “abstract geometrical aesthetic shared by bearers of the vernacular tradition” posits Jay Edwards<sup>39</sup>. He mentions the work of cultural geographers who found that a cottage type, which recurs throughout the West Indies, except in Cuba and Puerto Rico<sup>40</sup>, was always rectangular in plan and twice as long as wide, and that these proportions were established by 1673.<sup>41</sup> Edwards bases this thesis on Thomas Waterman’s finding that in the early period of colonization, circa 1628 to 1660, the traditional English house plan of solar/parlor, hall and kitchen did not appear in the Americas because it was already out-of-date in England. Instead, wrote Waterman, an abridged plan, known as the Virginia plan, of hall and chamber, became the norm in the West Indian colonies.<sup>42</sup> Eventually, continued Waterman, with the increase of wealth in Barbados, after 1645<sup>43</sup>, several planters erected “great houses” that were along the lines of an English country house save for the addition of galleries and the omission of

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<sup>39</sup> Jay D. Edwards, "The Evolution of Vernacular Architecture in the Western Caribbean," in *Cultural Traditions and Caribbean Identity*, ed. S. Jeffrey K. Wilkerson (Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida, 1980). 293.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 292

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 316.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 301. Thomas T. Waterman, "Some Early Buildings of Barbados," *The Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society* 13 (1945). 147.

<sup>43</sup> Note: Sugar cane cultivation had become profitable in Barbados by 1645.

fireplaces. Waterman's observations indicate that the settlers introduced a selection of the house types from their country of origin.

Careful analysis of the house forms in the areas where the African slaves originated shows that they were not significantly different from those of the Europeans; although the rooms differed in size, the house forms were rectangular, with rooms enfilade. Edwards noted that whereas few African house modules exceeded fourteen feet and were generally between seven and ten feet, there is no record in the literature of English or Welsh houses of less than sixteen feet wide.<sup>44</sup> In addition, there was no evidence in the colonies of enlargement "by adding rooms in a linear fashion"<sup>45</sup> except in slave housing; this extension tradition was common in both the British and African countries of origin.

The complexity of cultural transmissions and influences in the diverse Caribbean is the issue in the examination of the shotgun house type of Louisiana and surrounding states. In his PhD dissertation (1975)<sup>46</sup> and his subsequent book section about *The Shotgun House: An African American Architectural Legacy*<sup>47</sup>, John Michael Vlach looked at the origins of the house type. He demonstrated that Negro carpenters of St. Domingue, who migrated to New Orleans after the Haitian revolution in 1791, transmitted the tradition to Louisiana. Having identified the distinctive characteristics of the shotgun, the central alignment of doorways and enfilade arrangement of the rooms, he

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<sup>44</sup> Edwards, "The Evolution of Vernacular Architecture in the Western Caribbean." 305.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. 318.

<sup>46</sup> John Michael Vlach, "Sources of the Shotgun house: African and Caribbean antecedents for Afro-American Architecture" (PhD Dissertation, University of Indiana, 1975).

<sup>47</sup> ibid., "The Shotgun House: An African American Architectural legacy," in *Common Places: readings in American vernacular architecture*, ed. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1986).

measured standing examples of urban housing in Haiti and New Orleans and illustrated the similarities.

There is considerable evidence of syncretism and integration of a number of cultural building traditions in the greater Caribbean region. Vlach was able to show the influence of Norman roof truss construction, of the layouts of Yoruban buildings and the entry porch of Arawak *bohios* on the shot-gun type. Other researchers have subsequently identified similar layouts in other French colonies.

In an article about the planter or masters' houses of early French Caribbean territories<sup>48</sup>, where numbers of buildings are standing, Christophe Charlery showed that, despite superficial differences, there are certain recurring typologies of domestic space. He identified the recurring three-room rural house type with an enfilade arrangement that du Tertre mentioned, and provided an example from an archival drawing dated 1735 in Macayer à Remire, Guyane. The house layout suggests an earlier form of the shotgun<sup>49</sup>, though it had an encircling veranda rather than Arawak porch. [Figure. 2.5]. Having recognized that the three-room enfilade type was widespread in the French Caribbean, Charlery decided that the type could not have originated in Europe:

*Il est peu probable que cette distribution intérieure de la maison de maîtres aux colonies résulte de l'importation d'un modèle régional métropolitain*<sup>50</sup>.

[It is unlikely that this internal arrangement of the planter's houses in the colonies results from the "importation" of a regional model from the mother country.]

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<sup>48</sup> Christophe Charlery, "Maisons de maître et habitations coloniales dans les anciens territoires français de l'Amérique tropicale," (2004), <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/revue-inv/insitu5/d4/d4new/html/d4new.html>.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 20.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 4.

Enfilade circulation was standard in Europe until the late seventeenth century, so that it is not clear which attribute Charlery detected had an Amerindian or African provenance.

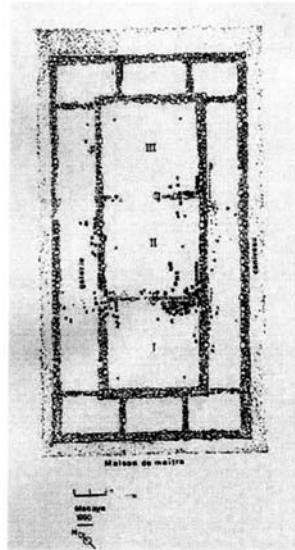


Fig. 13 - Extrait d'un plan des fondations de l'habitation sucrière Macaye à Remire (Guyane). Construite vers 1735, cette maison était très caractéristique dans sa distribution, avec ses galeries et ses cabinets aux quatre angles. Extrait de : Ministère de la Culture, *Une habitation en Guyane au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 1990. Repro. C. Charlery © C. Charlery, 2004.

Figure 2.5. The Three room typology in French Caribbean colonies. [Charlery. *Maisons de Maîtres et des Habitations Coloniales Dans les Anciens Territoires Français de l'Amérique Tropicale*].

In vernacular architecture, there is not a simple matter to definitively ascribing an attribute to a specific group except it differs significantly from that of the other impinging cultures. Carl Lounsbury mentioned the possibility of the mutual reinforcement of a technique, in North America, when it is similar to practices known to both African and European inhabitants.<sup>51</sup> Henry Glassie pointed out that African practices were more likely to survive when they were analogous to European ones:

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<sup>51</sup> Carl R. Lounsbury, ed., *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*, Prepared at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). 403.

African practices and material with non-African analogs stood a better chance of survival than did that which would have appeared totally alien to old marster.<sup>52</sup>

Charlery raised another issue, the reality of the past, when he noted that the present-day concept of the colonial house is of a large and commodious structure, but that that in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the houses were more akin to ordinary farmhouses.<sup>53</sup> He described the typical colonial house at the end of the seventeenth century as a low structure divided internally into two or three rooms, one which served as a hall, the second as a bedchamber, and the third as a larder.<sup>54</sup> His article covers the colonial period up to the mid-nineteenth century and deals with a range of building types, their use and construction methods and materials. It serves as a foundation for study of the French Caribbean architecture and for comparisons with the architecture of the British colonies.

### 2.2.2 Impermanence

Also arising in discussions of the architecture of the early colonial period is the issue of impermanence. In the British colonies in the Americas, there are only a few standing structures that date from the earliest period, though surviving documents indicate that considerably larger populations were present than are represented by these buildings.

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<sup>52</sup> Henry Glassie, *Pattern in the material FOLK CULTURE of the Eastern United States*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968). 117.

<sup>53</sup> Charlery. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. 4. du Tertre de l'Ordre des FF. Precheurs Vol 2 .457.

Through archaeological and documentary research of the Chesapeake area of Virginia, Carson et al compiled a significant body of information about the seventeenth century houses of the area. Their findings indicate that timber houses of earth-fast post, or planted post, construction were the predominant type in that mainland colony.<sup>55</sup> Carson et al applied the term “impermanent” to differentiate between temporary shelters, ones built on arrival in the colonies, and an intermediate wooden house that settlers lived in for years until they could afford to erect a brick-built structure. The authors summarized the successive stages in the development of colonial housing to be “hovel,” “house” and “home,” or in other words temporary shelter, impermanent structure and permanent structure.

The impermanent houses of Virginia appeared to conform with the “beginner’s house”, an idea recommended in an anonymous pamphlet promoting migration to Pennsylvania. The pamphlet, wrote Carson et al, promoted “a mean way of Building”, one that “ordinary beginners” would find “sufficient and safest”. The pamphlet recommended a house of 30 feet by 18 feet, with one partition near the middle and a second to divide one end into two smaller rooms, and indicated that these houses would last ten years without repair.<sup>56</sup> The problem for the scholars was the origin of the earth-fast post system used for their construction because they considered that the practice had not been common in Britain for centuries. The authors had an adequately large body of

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<sup>55</sup> Gary Carson et al., "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies," *Winterthur Portfolio* Autumn v.16, #2-3 (1981). 136.

<sup>56</sup> Note: *Information and Direction to Such Persons as are Inclined to America, More Especially Those Related to the Province of Pennsylvania* (n.p., n.d.), p.2. ( Copy of the Pennsylvania Historical society is reproduced by Photostat in the Massachusetts Historical Society Americana Series [Boston, 1919]) The tract is dated 1686 which has been confirmed as approximately accurate, but the authorship of William Penn is more doubtful. Ibid. 141.

examples to assert that earth-fast construction appeared “full blown in 1618” in the Chesapeake and was a practice in New England.<sup>57</sup> The problem became more complicated when later investigations found that the actual dates, at least of Jamestown structures and features, were much later than previously stated.<sup>58</sup>

The use of earth fast post construction was even more widespread than originally perceived. Carl Lounsbury<sup>59</sup> found the system in seventeenth century “Virginia” houses in Albemarle, North Carolina, and Roger Leech found extant examples dating from the seventeenth century in Nevis and references to costly houses using the system in manuscripts of the early eighteenth century in St. Christopher.<sup>60</sup> Underlying the scholars’ consternation about the widespread use of the earth-fast system is their underlying belief that Englishmen were unlikely to adopt a system from the Indians if there was no comparable feature in their culture. None of the scholars searched for analogies in the temporary structures, the tents and huts, which the settlers built on arrival, or in the traditions of the labor force.

This concept of impermanence, tied to earth-fast construction, and the acceptance of brick as a permanent material and a symbol of success may be more complex than it appeared at first. Roger Leech challenged the concept and argued that the houses of earth-fast construction in the British colonies were not necessarily impermanent or seen

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 137.

<sup>58</sup> Audrey Horning, "Jamestown Papers: Archaeology and the construction of America's Jamestown," *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 40, no. 1 (2006). 3.

<sup>59</sup> Carl R. Lounsbury, "The Plague of Building: Construction Practices on the Frontier, 1650-1730.," in *Architects and Builders in North Carolina: A History of the practice of Building*. (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

<sup>60</sup> Roger H. Leech, "Impermanent Architecture in the English Colonies of the Eastern Caribbean: New Contexts for Innovation in the Early Modern Atlantic World.," *Building Environments. Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*. X (2005).

as such by contemporaries. He pointed to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century Hermitage Estate house in Nevis, which has retained its earth-fast post foundations to the present; and Leech refers to the possible influence of Amerindian and Spanish traditions that employed the system to mitigate earthquake and hurricane damage.<sup>61</sup> Leech suggested that Carson's "impermanence is a matter of degree"<sup>62</sup> and that early settlers in Virginia and the Leeward Islands would have been familiar with the earth-fast structures shown in the Drake manuscript and the American drawings of John White (1577-1590) .

### 2.3 INVESTIGATIONS BY ARCHAEOLOGICISTS AND GEOGRAPHERS.

The study of British colonial architecture is hampered by the lack of detailed descriptions of the buildings of the early colonies by observant contemporaries. The need for concrete and incontrovertible evidence may account for archaeologists and geographers, and not architectural historians, leading the effort to push back the frontier of knowledge of the early colonial architecture in the Leeward Islands. Since the 1970s, archaeologists and cultural geographers from universities in Britain, the United States of America and Canada have been examining sites and landscapes in the Leeward Islands. The scope of their investigations varies from the close reading of a twenty-one foot square castellated structure at Newcastle, Nevis, to surveys of entire islands. One study investigated the traces of the Sephardim community on Nevis; others looked at the estates

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<sup>61</sup> Roger Leech, "Charlestown to Charleston - Urban Plantation Connections in an Atlantic Setting.."

<sup>62</sup> Leech, "Impermanent Architecture in the English Colonies of the Eastern Caribbean.."



of the wealthy planters, slave accommodations, mill complexes, and a vacant urban site. These valuable investigations have started to delineate characteristics of the architecture of the Leeward Islands and confirm the accuracy of the limited visual material, but the time required to accumulate adequate information to generalize, from site-specific remains, is protracted. Edwards commented on this issue in *The Evolution of a Vernacular Tradition*:

Even under ideal conditions, years of study are required to describe the cultural processes that produced a single tradition of vernacular architecture; in some cases, this may be insufficient<sup>63</sup>.

A social geographer completed the first major research project in the Leewards; it was about the changes to the landscape of Montserrat during the colonial period. For her PhD dissertation from Southern Illinois University in 1977, the geographer, Lydia Mihelic Pulsipher, looked at the European modifications to the landscape.<sup>64</sup> A major contribution of the study is the authentication of the unusual *Map of Mountserratt. 1673*. in the Blathwayt Atlas; Pulsipher found only a 7% deviation between the 1673 map data and a present day official survey in terms of the landforms.<sup>65</sup> The map is unusual in two ways:

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<sup>63</sup> Jay D. Edwards, "The Evolution of a Vernacular Tradition " *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* IV (1991). 75.

<sup>64</sup> Lydia Mihelic Pulsipher, "The Cultural landscape of Montserrat, West Indies, in the Seventeenth Century: Early Environmental Consequences of British Colonial Development." (PhD, Southern Illinois University, 1977).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. 169. Notes: (i) From Pulsipher one understands that the map may have been drawn from a ship anchored off-shore at different places in order to sketch the island profiles. (2) In Jeannette Black's commentary of the Blathwayt Atlas she noted the great care with which cultural detail was recorded which suggests that the cartographer was well acquainted with the island. (3) Pulsipher found that using the Koeman scale of the quality of evidence of early maps that the map registers between categories 3 and 4 where the former indicates that "the map is to date the only source of data because other material has not

- The draftsman used a combination of cartographic techniques to record the layout and structures of all the slopes of the island;<sup>66</sup> and,
- It was included in William Blathwayt's collection of maps sent from larger colonies to the Council of Trades and Plantation.

What no one has been able to verify is the actual date of the representation because an earthquake rocked Montserrat on Christmas Day 1672, and damaged some of the buildings shown on the map. In a subsequent article in 1987, Pulsipher still held that the map was "Stapleton's version of reality" and suggested that the Deputy-Governor was the cartographer himself. She then hypothesized that, based on the French vessels in the Plymouth roadstead, Stapleton may have depicted the island just prior to the French raid of 1667 for official reasons.<sup>67</sup>

By linking the information on the Map with other archival material like the census of 1677 and the Treasurer's Accounts of 1672-4<sup>68</sup>, Pulsipher described the nature of the community in 1673. Large expanses of the lower slopes of the landscape had been cleared of forest and divided geometrically for farming, which she considered an effort to produce a landscape that appeared ordered and similar to the home country.<sup>69</sup> The new approach obliterated the Amerindian garden or *conuco* system of temporary clearings in the woods that could be safe from unfriendly eyes:

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come to light" and "the map is an adequate source of data, though other authoritative contemporary documentation exists".

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, "Assessing the Usefulness of a Cartographic Curiosity: The 1673 Map of a Sugar Island.," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 77, no. 3 (1987). Note: see Appendix 1 of the dissertation for full discussion of the cartographic practices.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* 413.

<sup>68</sup> Note; all these documents including the Map were prepared whilst the able administrator, William Stapleton, was deputy-governor for Montserrat.

<sup>69</sup> Pulsipher, "The Cultural landscape of Montserrat". 152.

The hundreds of structures which had been built between 1632 and 1680 firmly established the “civilized” character of the island ...the function, size, number and distribution of these buildings were not particularly influenced by the physical qualities of the tropical island...revealed Old World preferences and prejudices in matters of social status and in matters of how the land should be used.<sup>70</sup>

By 1673 on Montserrat, a highway system was in place, which is the basis of the present road system; in addition, in the port towns, there were forts, customs houses and other public buildings. At least part of the two-story prison building was of timber, for the treasurer’s accounts show that he paid three men for sawing wood and making shingles; in addition, the Court of Judicature, to be built near Stapletowne, was to be constructed with cratches, thatching, wattle and daub<sup>71</sup>. Pulsipher believed that the term ‘cratch’ was a synonym for ‘cruck’ , which was a construction system familiar to one used by the predominantly Irish artisans<sup>72</sup>. The uncertainty of the date of the map left Pulsipher in a quandary about whether the larger buildings shown were of wood rather than of stone, a change in practices which, she deduced from records, started after the 1672 earthquake. The draftsman identified the largest buildings on the map, so Pulsipher was able to connect them with archival references. By allowing for “Stapleton’s version of reality”, the ‘Church of St. Anthonia’ was read as Anthony Brisket’s stone and brick structure of 1636 that de Rochefort had described before 1666:

A very fair church of a delightful Structure...The Pulpit, the seats and all the Joyners and Carpenter’s work within it are of the most precious and sweet scented wood growing in the Country.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. 132.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 129.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 130.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 128. Cesar de Rochefort, ed., *Histoire naturelle et morale des Iles Antilles de l’Amerique - The history of the Caribby Islands viz Barbadoes, St. Christophers, St. Vincents, Martinico, Dominico,*

Pulsipher identified a distinctive structure, “Osborn’s Hous”, as formerly belonging to Samuel Waad. The structure was “States Castle”, for which there is the first description known of a seventeenth-century plantation home in Montserrat. In 1654, “States Castle” was considered: “a stately built stone house richly furnished with all sorts of furniture to a great value being esteemed the fairest of any house in ye Caribba Islands”<sup>74</sup>. In spite of the difference in their appearance, Pulsipher found that the two buildings, ‘States Castle’ and ‘Coves Castle’ were in keeping with the stylistic trends of England.<sup>75</sup>

Most of the other larger houses, she continued, had either gable or hipped roofs. Several appeared to have two or more stories, and others had cross-gables and L-shaped wings; however, she considered they were not “stylish enough to stand out”. Pulsipher produced less information about the largest group of structures, the houses, storehouses, shops and outbuildings, which she found insignificant:

Small, undistinguished buildings, which were built of cheap materials with little attention to style. The term vernacular indicates not only that they were simple and multi-purpose; but also that they were relatively numerous.<sup>76</sup>

She saw the 280 rural workers’ cottages on the map as similar to the numerous one-story, hot, windowless cottages of Barbados, described by Ligon, for the houses were aligned north-south, in European fashion, to catch the full afternoon sun. Pulsipher confirmed that the distribution of these small houses and their parish locations was approximately representative of the population spread of the 1677 census.

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*Barbouthos, Montserrat, Nevis, Antigo etc in all XXVIII---with a Caribbean vocabulary.* (London: printed by J.M. for Thomas Dring and John Starkey and are sold at their shop.... 1666). 19.

<sup>74</sup> Pulsipher, "The Cultural landscape of Montserrat". 146. Aubrey Gwynn, "Documents relating to the Irish in Montserrat," *Analecta Hibernica* 4 (1932). 223.

<sup>75</sup> Pulsipher, "The Cultural landscape of Montserrat". 146.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. 148.

On the ground, however, it was difficult to identify the remains of the seventeenth century, for “dense jungle cover” covers them and the ruins are in areas no longer inhabited. Pulsipher and Conrad undertook a geographical and historical archaeology study of a large plantation, ‘Galway’s’, which an Irishman founded in the 1660s and by 1729 encompassed to over 1300 acres. The authors reported on standing masonry ruins of the post-1750 period industrial complex at an elevation of 1100 feet above sea level. Then they tentatively identified a stone tunnel, a series of retaining walls and stone foundations, at and below ground level, as the only remains of seventeenth century structures.<sup>77</sup>

The recording of a crenellated structure at Newcastle, Nevis, speaks to the availability of masonry skills on the island, the use of local volcanic materials for mortar and the lack of knowledge about the early colonial period. In 1995 and 1996 archaeologists from the University of Southampton, Britain, led by Elaine Morris, recorded the crenellated twenty-one foot square structure with fifteen-foot high walls with measured drawings; they did peripheral excavations in search of artifacts and analyzed the mortar. The first known reference to the structure in British records is in the Minutes of the Nevis Assembly in 1706, which referred to the building as “the old stone fort at Newcastle”; the archaeologists found no evidence of military activity around the structure. They found that the fort was constructed in a single phase save for a later stone

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<sup>77</sup> Lydia M. Pulsipher and Conrad M. Goodwin, "A sugar-boiling house at Galways: An Irish sugar plantation in Montserrat, West Indies," *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, no. 16 (1982).

cistern and adjoining buildings.<sup>78</sup> [Figure 2.6] The researchers could not determine the original purpose for the structure even though military experts noted the resemblance to structures on a map (1624) by Captain John Smith. [Figure 2.7] The lower loopholes had a field of vision on the landward side only, the embrasures of the crenellations were unsuited for firing cannon and the entrance door faced seaward; these features suggest use against a land-based enemy.

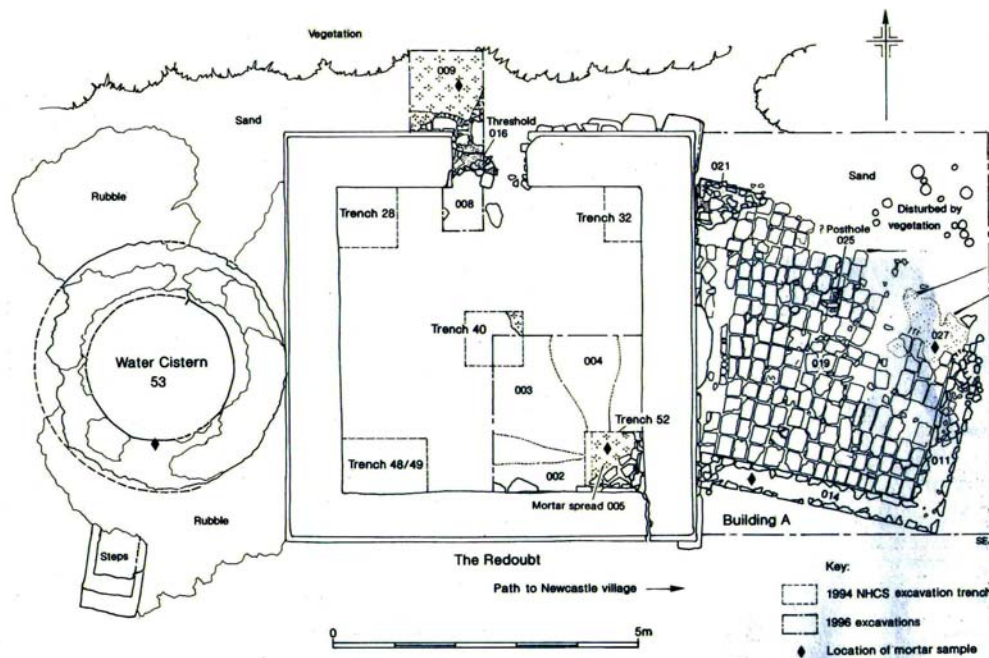


FIG. 3  
The Redoubt: site plan including locations of excavation trenches and mortar samples.

Figure 2.6. The layout of the 'old fort' at Newcastle recorded by Morris et al. "...*The Old Stone Fortt at Newcastle...*" (1999). [Courtesy of the Journal of the Society of Post-medieval Archaeology].

<sup>78</sup> Elaine Morris, Robert Read, S. Elizabeth James and Tessa Machling, with David F. Williams and Brent Wilson, "'...the old stone fort' at Newcastle..." *The Redoubt, Nevis, East Caribbean.*, *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 33 (1999). 209.

The structure was sturdily built, for heavy mechanical equipment was required to demolish it in December 1999 to make way for expansion of the airport runway. The authors analyzed samples of mortar from the Newcastle fort and other datable stone structures on St. Christopher and Nevis. The analysis detected negligible quantities of local and volcanic additives in the very white mortar of the Newcastle structure, which is consistent with local legend that white mortars are of imported materials. The results from later sites showed an increase in the proportions of volcanic additives in the pinky-grey mortar of the buildings over time<sup>79</sup>.



Figure 2.7. Detail from the *Johan Blaeu Atlas* Map of the Somers Islands or Bermuda (1625) showing defensive castles. [Permission of the Georgia Institute of Technology Library and Information Center].

<sup>79</sup> Note: The mortar at Fort Charles, Nevis, likely to date to 1670 contained about 15% local additives; the Hamilton windmill built circa 1740, the off-white mortar contained between 10% and 15%; the windmill at Coconut Walk constructed in 1805 contained 20% to 25% of volcanic aggregate. The rubble stone walls on Nevis are generally 24" to 30" thick with 2 outer layers of field stone. The earliest work found at the fort and Russell's Rest (ca. 1650) is random with dressed quoins and was plastered. Later work is coursed and fairfaced.

An archaeological study to identify the remains of the Charlestown synagogue of 1740 confirmed the diversity of traditions and cultures that contributed to the development of the Leewards. The study of the Sephardim residents of Nevis found that the majority of the Jews lived in the southern portion of Charlestown, in what the archaeologist, Michele Terrell, termed a “ghetto”, though she gave no evidence of any constrictive regulations. Her investigation of property records<sup>80</sup> revealed only that the Sephardim selected to live in close proximity to each other.<sup>81</sup> The Jewish quarter lay on the sides of the main highway out of town, which gave the area the name “Jew’s Walk”, a name that was later transferred to a lane leading to the cemetery. Unfortunately, the overlay of late eighteenth century buildings prevented confirmation of the site of the wooden synagogue.

The Jewish settlers who began to arrive in Nevis in the 1670’s came from Brazil via Barbados in search of improved economic activity. They were successful on the island because of their familiarity with the sugar industry, the slave trade, merchant shipping and trade from their years in Pernambuco and Bahia when under Dutch occupation. The families never forgot their exile from Iberia in the Netherlands. They retained their links with the people of Hamburg, their original Spanish and Portuguese names like Lobatto, Abendana, and Abundiente<sup>82</sup>, and continued the use of the Portuguese language.

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<sup>80</sup> Note: Terrell drew much of the data for mapping the ghetto, for her PhD dissertation, from property records in the Nevis Court Registry; unfortunately, they have subsequently been withdrawn from use due to their deteriorating condition.

<sup>81</sup> Michelle M. Terrell, "The Historical Archaeology of the 17th and 18th century Jewish community of Nevis, British West Indies." (PhD, Boston University, 2000). Vi.

<sup>82</sup> Note: these names are still legible on the tombstones in the Jewish cemetery in Charlestown.



The site of Christopher Jeaffreson's manor, Wingfield, in St Christopher was the focus of an archaeological study by students from Bristol University, UK.<sup>83</sup> Dan Hick's and Mark Horton's surveys and excavations confirmed the accuracy of an extant survey map that was prepared in 1682 and "copied and reduced" in 1819<sup>84</sup> for a later Christopher Jeaffreson. In the interim report, the authors dated the extensive walls on the site to the seventeenth century and interpreted them as protective features, suggesting that the walls were later backfilled, re-used and repaired during the working life of the estate. The location of the two-gabled house shown in a position elevated above the walled enclosure on the 1682 survey, and on the Baker map of 1756, is identifiable on site by "a wide open platform in an area of pasture". The authors ascertained that the site of King Tegreman's house is that of the present Romney Manor and formerly Thomas Warner's house. This site is on top of a hill overlooking Old Road with a magnificent view out to the nearby islands.

Several archaeologists have made examination of the Pinney Family Papers the starting point of their investigations, and their reports contain a wealth of data about the buildings and architecture of Nevis.<sup>85</sup> The research by the TIME TEAM<sup>86</sup> in 1998 on

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<sup>83</sup> Dan Hicks and Mark C. Horton, "An archaeological Landscape Survey, Building Survey and Evaluative Excavation at Wingfield Estate, St. Kitts, Eastern Caribbean. Interim Report. Summer 2001.," (Bristol: University of Bristol, 2001).

<sup>84</sup> CJ, "Wingfield manor appertaining to Christopher Jeaffreson Esq. in St. Christopher's Island. "Surveyed April 1682 by M. Lord Rogers & copied and reduced from his Plan February 20th, 1819, by CJ.," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles collection, Hamilton College*. (Clinton, NY.: 1819).

<sup>85</sup> Note: Azariah Pinney arrived in Nevis from England circa 1686, an exile for his involvement in the Monmouth Rebellion; he was nearly penniless or so the legend tells. Within a matter of years Pinney had become a major landowner, money lender and trader; these successes formed the basis of a family fortune which was administered from Bristol in later generations. To this day, his descendants deposit their

the lost town of Jamestown, Nevis, and the nearby Pinney properties was preparatory for a BBC television program. On the site of the former port of Jamestown, the Time Team located cobbled streets and stone foundation walls that collapsed during an earthquake in the late seventeenth century. The team also uncovered the foundations of the earliest house at Mountravers.

The interim annual reports of the "Nevis Heritage Project" by the University of Southampton and British Academy<sup>87</sup> relate their studies of Pinney-owned sites and a vacant lot on the Charlestown waterfront. In 2001, examination of the Woodlands plantation site at 900 feet above sea-level revealed the house and surrounding complex:

The house occupied a position of surveillance, overlooking the works. It was of one room deep with insubstantial stone walls, probably the foundation for a timber framed structure above. On the west side was a centrally placed projecting porch...The complex and attendant yards stood within a large enclosure.<sup>88</sup>

At the Montravers plantation, the investigations recovered the paved floor of the cellar of the late seventeenth century plantation house along with a plastered stone window reveal and glazed Delft tile of the late seventeenth century. It appeared to the archaeologists that the owners had extended an early house some time before the re-

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business and family correspondence in the Special Collections of Bristol Library. The story of the Pinney business house is recounted in Pares *A West-India Fortune*.

<sup>86</sup> Peter S. Bellamy and Wayne A. Hardwicke with contributions by David Barker, Dr. D.A. Higgins, Tessa Machiling, Elaine L. Morris, Mark Nokkert and David Small., "Jamestown", St. Thomas Lowland, Nevis. Archaeological Investigations by Time Team. Oct 1998., (London: Time Team. 49 Goldhawk Rd., London, W12 8QP, 2004).

<sup>87</sup> The Interim reports are available online at [www.arch.soton.ac.uk/research/Nevis/Nevis.html](http://www.arch.soton.ac.uk/research/Nevis/Nevis.html)

<sup>88</sup> E. Morris and R. Leech, Crosby, A., Machling, T., and Williams, B., "Nevis Heritage Project Interim Report 2001," (Southampton: University of Southampton, 2002). 58.

building on the site of another house in the early eighteenth century. The house had a buried post structure.<sup>89</sup>

One of the first efforts to view the archaeological findings on the islands in the context of the wider world was in the publications of Roger Leech PhD of the University of Southampton. Leech's intention in the article on *Impermanent Architecture in the English Colonies of the Eastern Caribbean (2005)*<sup>90</sup> was to identify some of the British cultural traditions evident in early colonial buildings. On the issue of building materials and impermanence, Leech referred to authors like David A. Brown and Dwayne Pickett, who had shown that the colonial elite owned some twenty-four or more masonry houses in seventeenth century Virginia. In addition, Pickett had put forward that "this same elite used brick architecture as a means of enforcing social distinctions and control of the landscape"<sup>91</sup>. Leech suggested that the tradition of the masonry houses on the outskirts of Jamestown might have had less to do with enforcing social distinctions and more with the practice of urban merchants, in seventeenth century England, of maintaining a country house near the town for entertaining and for occasional residence.

The issue of the buried post system of the British colonies comes up again, but with reference to the conditions in which they have been located in the Leewards. By this time, Leech had convinced himself that the settlers learned the system from the American Indians. He came to this position after considering a suggestion that the origin

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>90</sup> Leech, "Impermanent Architecture in the English Colonies of the Eastern Caribbean.."

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.. 154. Dwayne A Pickett, "The John Paige House Site: An Example of the Increase in Domestic Brick Architecture in Seventeenth-Century Tidewater Virginia." (Master's Thesis, College of William and Mary, 1996). 75.

lay in the vernacular tradition of Andalusia, but the puzzle remained of the implications of wooden posts encased in mortar and stone foundations during what he believes was later rebuilding. He refers to at least four examples of encasement in Nevis:

- At Hermitage Great House, intact lignum vitae posts support the structure, which he assigned to the late seventeenth century, based on the roof structure, rather than the previously accepted date of circa 1740<sup>92</sup>;
- A merchant house of the Charlestown waterfront, which he dated to the early eighteenth century.

For general information, he summarized the housing in St. Christopher in 1706 from the examination of the *Report of Losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Christopher and Nevis*<sup>93</sup>:

Larger houses were typically eighteen to twenty feet wide, fifty to sixty feet long, of three or more rooms, and between 150 and 500 pounds in value. Some smaller houses and other buildings were of cruck construction similar to a house in Montserrat reported by Lydia Pulsipher in 1986.<sup>94</sup>

The analysis of artifacts found, and archaeological surveys of extensive areas of Nevis substantiated, that the early British colonists were attuned to local natural processes and accommodated them. In his doctoral dissertation of 2004, Marco Meniketti<sup>95</sup> revealed that in their settlement of the small, sloping island of Nevis, the

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<sup>92</sup> Suzanne Slesin et al., *Caribbean Style*, First ed. (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1985). 98-103.

<sup>93</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8).

<sup>94</sup> Leech, "Impermanent Architecture in the English Colonies of the Eastern Caribbean.." 155.

<sup>95</sup> Marco Guido Meniketti, "The Historical Archaeology of Nevis, West Indies: Capitalism, Environment, and the Evolution of the Caribbean Colonial Landscape, 1625-1833." (Michigan State University, 2004).

European settlers integrated the natural landforms and phenomena into the layouts of their estates and residences in order to produce a sustainable environment.

At the survival level, the colonists developed a method of collecting fresh water on the island, where the few streams run only seasonally. They dug wells in low-lying areas of ghauts and valleys, which were necessarily near to sea level. However, the design allowed for the capture of the fresh ground water because it floats on the denser seawater. Meniketti found two such wells that are still in use for watering animals; they appear to date from the first century of colonization<sup>96</sup>.

The most extensive example of sensitive land-use practices was the terracing of the hillsides, using the local fieldstone, in order to provide level land for planting. The remains of these efforts were visible in aerial photographs of the 1940s, and to a lesser degree on the ground.<sup>97</sup> The colonists took a similar approach with house construction, which is apparent from the presence of numerous house locations marked by stone-faced platforms or foundations; artifacts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries surrounded many of the sites.<sup>98</sup> Due to this approach to preparing level bases for buildings, the colonists were able to build residences at high elevations on steep sites to enjoy cooling breezes. In St. Thomas parish above the golf course of the Four Seasons Resort, Meniketti found the remains of considerable stone buildings on steep, but

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid. 109, 117.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. 144, 148, 163.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. 148, 153.

terraced, terrain between the 500 foot and 1000 foot contour. This zone has now returned to jungle-like growth<sup>99</sup>.

Meniketti commented that “some of the most spectacular structures encountered during survey were found in the zone just above 1000 feet,” and described the remains of a two-story villa, which had been surrounded by walled formal gardens, with vaulted cellars and faced west<sup>100</sup>. The location provided the house with a magnificent view over the island and across the straits to St. Christopher, Saba and St. Eustatius. In another area, St. John’s parish, the number of early housing platforms and estates above the 1000-foot contour suggested that the cooling breezes were the attraction, and confirmed the reason for the large number of windmills, now ruined, of the area.<sup>101</sup> Meniketti also noted the use of stone walls to demarcate property boundaries, and that the eighteenth century sugar cultivation had eradicated or disturbed the earlier layers of settlement.

## 2. 4 POPULAR HISTORIES OF CARIBBEAN ARCHITECTURE

Since the first popular publications post-World War II histories for tourists and armchair travelers to those for Caribbean readers, the target audience has changed. The literature is now more inclusive and extensive in scope, but affords scant space to the

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. 163.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. 164. Note: “the villa was tentatively identified by Southampton researchers as Paris’s Gardens and was a country house....a planter’s retreat.”

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. 153.

buildings of the early colonial period or of the Leewards. However, this is starting to change.

One of the first publications was *Treasure in the Caribbean. A first study of Georgian buildings in the Caribbean* (1949)<sup>102</sup>, by a British official, Angus Acworth, who reported on standing examples of classically influenced buildings in a tone of amazement at the forgotten British architecture in faraway places. In response to the developing tourist industry in the Caribbean, Virginian Radcliffe promoted a romantic view of the West Indies in *The Treasures Of 500 Turbulent Years* (1976) with the stated intention of producing a “guide book that will open up a new world to Caribbean visitors and armchair travelers alike”<sup>103</sup>. For her audience, Radcliffe recorded and photographed Carib petroglyphs as well as historic architecture from Trinidad to Cuba, and included swashbuckling buccaneer tales and photographs of schoolchildren. The book, which included some structures in the Leeward Islands, is a valuable archive of the historic structures before the affluence of the post-independence period lead to their demolition.. Radcliffe presented her insights about the colonial landscape in chapters entitled “The Great House on the Hill” and “The Town in the Bay”. The text serves primarily to bring together commonly held knowledge of the various islands, but does point out the primary aspects of colonial settlement.

In the 1980s, the publications took a more serious approach because they were targeting a broader audience of Caribbean people as well as visitors. The authors

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<sup>102</sup> Angus Whiteford Acworth, *Treasure in the Caribbean, a first study of Georgian buildings in the West Indies.*, The Georgian handbooks (London: Pleiades Books, 1949).

<sup>103</sup> Virginia Radcliffe, *The Caribbean Heritage. an illustrated guide to the treasures of 500 turbulent years.* (New York: Walker and Company, 1976). Dustjacket.

organized the material by themes, building type or culture, but generally the Leeward Islands were swept up in generalizations of the larger Caribbean islands, in part because, as Riva Berleant-Schiller wrote, “Barbados, more fully documented and described in the seventeenth century, has become a surrogate for the English Caribbean colonies”.<sup>104</sup> The writers no longer portrayed Caribbean buildings as curiosities, but for those “who have grown up among these buildings or who are seeing them on visits to the islands”<sup>105</sup>. The books focused on the existing remains of the Amerindians, primarily petroglyphs, Georgian houses, military structures and the gingerbread houses of later periods, or museum reconstructions. This is understandable because of the need for illustrations to fill well-illustrated books.

In the second wave of publications, one of the first authors to query the accepted interpretations of the extant historic buildings was an academic historian, David Buisseret. In *Historic Architecture of the Caribbean* (1980), he debated the acceptance of the seventeenth century, four-towered rectangular complexes of “Colbeck Castle” and “Stokes Hall” in Jamaica as quasi-military structures, and drew attention to the de Poincy mansion in S. Christophe. [Figure. 2.8]. The remainder of the volume relates to urban, military, commercial and industrial (sugar) structures that were standing in the 1980’s. Buisseret articulated the need for original research. In later years, Buisseret published scholarly works on Port Royal<sup>106</sup>, and James Robertson did the same on Spanish Town

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<sup>104</sup> Riva Berleant-Schiller, "Free Labor and the Economy in Seventeenth-century Montserrat," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., Vol. 46, no. 3 (1989). 540.

<sup>105</sup> David Buisseret, *Historic Architecture of the Caribbean* (Kingston, Jamaica: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1980). Backpiece.

<sup>106</sup> Michael Pawson and David Buisseret, *Port Royal, Jamaica*, 2nd ed. (Barbados. Jamaica. Trinidad and Tobago: The University of the West Indies Press, 2000).



and on the pre-Georgian houses of Jamaica<sup>107</sup>. The authors indicated that as early as the 1650s, bricks were burnt on Jamaica and were the primary construction material for residences.



Figure 2.8. Aerial view of Colbeck Castle, St. Catherine, Jamaica. [Buisseret. *Historic Architecture of the Caribbean*.]

More in line with the approach of earlier books is Pamela Gosner's<sup>108</sup> collection of sketches of Georgian- style buildings. As indicated by the title *The Great and Small Houses* (1982), the work does not focus solely on the grand houses, but it is primarily a record of what is standing. The best-known book, *Caribbean Style* (1985)<sup>109</sup>, deals with French and British traditions. This is a colorful publication by Suzanne Slesin et al, and has endeared the fretwork and gabled elevations of Victorian and Edwardian

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<sup>107</sup> James Robertson, "Jamaican Architecture before Georgian," *Winterthur Portfolio* 36, no. 2/3 (2001).

<sup>108</sup> Pamela W. Gosner, *Caribbean Georgian, the great and small houses of the West Indies* (Washington D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1982).

<sup>109</sup> Slesin et al.

Caribbean houses to present-day builders and visitors. A particular contribution of the book is that it draws attention to the fact that, in many buildings, accretions overlaid and hide early colonial structures. The book includes measured drawings and commentary about the oldest existing structures in the Lesser Antilles whose cores date from the seventeenth century: Hermitage Great House in Nevis, and *La Pecoul* and other estate houses in Guadeloupe and Martinique.

The other widely accepted histories of Caribbean architecture are Edward Crain's *Historic Architecture in the Caribbean Islands* (1994)<sup>110</sup> and Andrew Gravette's *Architectural Heritage of the Caribbean Islands* (2000)<sup>111</sup>. These books, which focus on standing remains, add photographic records to the knowledge base of Caribbean architecture. The most recent work, Suzanne Gordon and Anne Hersch's *Searching for Sugar Mills: An Architectural Guide to the Eastern Caribbean* (2005), draws attention to new destinations for the curious travelers.<sup>112</sup> The information in these publications is primarily from secondary and, on occasion, unreliable sources.

The intention of the popular publications on the history of Caribbean architecture is to record and draw attention to existing structures, to the character of the architecture, which is predominantly of the late eighteenth century. This brief overview of popular publications on the historic buildings of the Caribbean finds a place in a review of scholarly literature in order to confirm the gap in the literature and general knowledge

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<sup>110</sup> Edward Crain, *Historic Architecture of the Caribbean Islands* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1994).

<sup>111</sup> Andrew Gravette, *Architectural heritage of the Caribbean. An A-Z of Historic Buildings*. (Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 2000).

<sup>112</sup> Suzanne Gordon and Anne Hersch, *Searching for Sugar Mills; An Architectural Guide to the East Caribbean*. (Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2005).

about Caribbean architecture prior to the Georgian period, and particularly in the Leeward Islands. This gap has led to the acceptance that there were no substantial buildings in the earlier colonial period. For this reason, none of these books prepare a reader for the reality of the colonial landscapes of the Leeward Islands.

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## **CHAPTER 3 - ARCHIVAL RESEARCH, ANALYSIS OF THE DATA, AND CONTEXT.**

This chapter deals with the methodology of the study. It starts with a report on the selection of archives, their locations and the nature of the data collected and continues with a discussion of the methods of analysis and the need for a contextual background with which to interpret the large volume of fragmentary data. The next step is a review of domestic house types and developmental trends in the countries of origin of the major groups of European settlers.

### **3.1 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.**

The first stage of the archival research was the location and examination of primary resources, maps, drawings, letters and manuscripts of the target period, and the accumulation of historical material. The quantity of material had to be adequate for generalizations to be made on the types, nature and characteristics of the domestic architecture. The second stage was the sorting and analysis of the volume of synchronous data accumulated.

The relevant archival material is dispersed in repositories across the Americas and Europe. Thus, at an early stage, a selection had to be made of reputable archives with



holdings that were most likely to yield a volume of useful information during a visit. The approach taken was two-pronged and entailed the examination of the holdings at

- major archives with extensive collections of official seventeenth and eighteenth century manuscripts - in search of a volume of data.
- minor archives and collections - in search of detailed information in personal and business correspondence.

### 3.1.1 The Archives and Repositories.

Searches in bibliographic guides, on-line catalogs, bibliographies in literature and suggestions by archivists and other researchers played a role in the selection of depositories that were, possibly, worth a visit. The most rewarding visits were those to the Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, the National Archives of St. Kitts, the National Archives of Britain and the Pinney Family Papers.

The major archives selected and visited in person were:

- National Archives of St. Kitts, Basseterre, St. Kitts.
- National Archives of Britain, Kew, London, UK.
- British Library, Euston, London UK.
- National Archives of Antigua, St. Johns, Antigua.

Visits to these archives lasted from three days at the least fruitful repository, to upwards of six weeks at the National Archives of St. Kitts. A more detailed report with a discussion of the individual repositories is attached in Appendix A – Report on Visits to the Major Archives.

The minor archives or collections selected and visited in person were

- Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY.
- The Map Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Pinney Family Papers, Special Collections, Bristol University, Bristol, UK.
- Tate Britain Gallery, London, UK.
- Stapleton Family Papers, Special Collections, Manchester University, Manchester, UK.
- The Montserrat National Trust, Salem, Montserrat.
- Public Library, Brades, Montserrat.
- Registry of the Supreme Court, Brades, Montserrat.
- Central Library, University of the West Indies, Mona , Jamaica.
- Museum of Antigua and Barbuda, Old Court House, St. Johns, Antigua.
- Registry of Deeds of the Supreme Court of the OECS, Charlestown, Nevis.
- Nevis Historical and Conservation Society, Bath, Nevis.
- St. Christopher Heritage Society, Basseterre, St. Kitts.
- Registry of Deeds of the Supreme Court of the OECS, Basseterre, St. Kitts.

These visits took between three hours and four days. The Special Collections of University Libraries, where Leeward Island families deposited their papers, required the longest visits. For a discussion on the visits and holdings of the individual repositories see Appendix B – Report on Visits to Minor Archives.

On-line resources, including the ARCHON catalogue of British Archives, permitted the identification of relevant documents in small and distant collections:

- Carter Brown Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.
- Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, UK.
- Bristol Records office, UK.
- Gloucestershire Records Office, UK.
- Somerset Archives, UK.
- Nottinghamshire Archives, UK.
- Surrey History Centre, UK.
- Lincolnshire Archives, UK.
- West Yorkshire Archives, UK.
- Herefordshire Archives, UK.

### 3.1.2. The Historical Data.

The information about the domestic buildings of the Leewards in the first century of European settlement is primarily in the form of an inventory of some description: probate records, claims for reparations, deeds of sale or lease agreement. This is common for buildings of the period and for traditional/vernacular architecture. At that time, builders and owners did not have the need for detailed drawings to communicate their requirements. In *Good and Sufficient Language for Building*<sup>1</sup>, Catherine Bishir looked at the brevity of building contracts in seventeenth and eighteenth century

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine W. Bishir, "Good and Sufficient Language for Building.," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* IV (1991).

vernacular environments; she observed that the parties often referred to known buildings or types then spoke about differences and the special requirements for their project.

The historical material accumulated in the archival research could be compared to the pottery shards from an archaeological dig; the data consisted of a substantial volume of small pieces of information. The majority of the data, the fragments of information about buildings and their contents, in the Leewards, fall into one of the following categories:

- a) Legislation; public and business account books; leases and personal correspondence.
- b) A small number of contemporary images from official maps and surveys.
- c) Over 300 brief inventories of domestic buildings that were damaged or burnt in the 1706 French Raid on St. Christopher. The householders described their buildings as they were before the damage; their statements were recorded under the supervision of Commissioners appointed by Queen Anne of England. This volume of synchronous inventories or outline descriptions of the houses has a concise format:

One dwelling house in the town of Old Road consisting of 4 rooms considered to be 60 foot long and 21 wide mastick and lignum vitae boarded and shingled in the mastick boards....£200<sup>2</sup>;

A dwelling house about 6 years old built with good Deal and frame timber, boarded, and shingled consisting of one large Hall and chamber and 1 porch with one out chamber...£150;<sup>3</sup> and,

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<sup>2</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8). 132.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 46.

One house 24 foot long x 12 wide and wild caned round built with country timber consisting of 2 rooms....£6:00:00<sup>4</sup>

- d) Similar brief descriptions of over 125 non-domestic structures including agricultural, religious, commercial ones, damaged in St. Christopher in 1706.
- e) Ten inventories and brief descriptions of houses and properties in Nevis and St. Christopher found in probate, official and business documents; the documents date from different periods between 1670 and 1722. This diachronous date includes the few surviving claims of buildings destroyed in Nevis in the 1706 raid but are in varying formats.
- f) Twenty-five descriptions of domestic and agricultural buildings that were standing in the former French quarter of S. Christophe, in the year 1726.

The primary resource of information about the buildings of St. Christopher in (c) and (d), and to a lesser degree in (e) is the *Report of the Commission to Inquire into Losses Sustained by the inhabitants of St. Christopher and Nevis during the French Raid of 1705/6. Claims Allowed.* (1707/8). This unusual manuscript was the first step towards the payment of reparations following the near annihilation of the two valuable sugar-producing islands:

The French in February and March 1706, landed on those islands (Nevis and St. Christopher) and Burnt and destroyed almost all the Dwelling Houses, Sugar Works and other buildings, carried away the greatest part of the Negroes, Coppers, Stills, merchandizes and other valuable goods to the real damage of the inhabitants and traders, Five hundred Thousand pounds

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.138.

sterling and upwards...Whereupon Her Majesty....appoint Commissioners to compute their losses....£356,926 10s 1d.<sup>5</sup>

The outcry at the devastation led Queen Anne and Parliament to agree to compensate the inhabitants in order to regenerate sugar production that was so vital to Britain's maritime economy. The Commissioners checked the claims made and when they disagreed with the values or items decided that "having had full proof thereof and finding [the loss] sustained other..." than claimed, they reduced the amount on the record.<sup>6</sup> Each claimant, or his attorney, made oath "on the Holy Evangelists, that the several losses mentioned in the account were actually and truly sustained" and signed the document.<sup>7</sup>

The *1707/8 Commission Report* is 695 folios long, with pounds sterling estimates of the damages suffered by 334 individuals and partnerships, which include over 400 buildings and structures. Of that number, 311 were domestic comprised of residences, out-chambers, stables, outhouses, cookrooms, and other less substantial structures like Negro houses. In addition, there were three churches and structures related to agricultural production. Some of the inventories included furniture, furnishings, books, artwork and clothing. The bulk of the larger and more valuable section of the Commission Report, which concerns the losses in Nevis, is lost.

The total value accepted for damages in St. Christopher was £123,931 14s 3d sterling. In 1711, Parliament approved payment of one third of the value of the losses at

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<sup>5</sup> "To the Honorable Commons in Parliament Assembled. The Case of the Poor distressed planters and other inhabitants of the islands of Nevis & St. Christophers in America.," in *CUP. British Library* (London: 1709).

<sup>6</sup> Gillard et al. folio 6.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. folio 8.

six percent interest per annum, to persons who had re-settled before Dec 25, 1711<sup>8</sup>; the receipts for payments comprise another document. Inspection of the report reveals that the greatest losses were in Negroes, plantation equipment and stores, animals and cane in the fields; however, it is probable that due to location, or collusion, some properties were spared and that masonry structures were not necessarily mentioned.

The other resources that individually produced a substantial number of building descriptions or inventories are the Pinney Family Papers at Bristol University; the *Map of Mountserrat. 1673* of the Blathwayt Atlas; the *Copy of the Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty's Leeward Caribbean Islands in America...For Disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the Island of St. Christopher's Formerly Belonging to the French* (1726)<sup>9</sup>.

### 3.13 Analysis of the Synchronous Historical Data.

The thesis of this study is that the apparently cryptic descriptions of peoples' houses were a full form of communication, they could be succinct because the writers and recipients shared a common context and understanding of domestic architecture. To the writers of that pre-industrial, or early industrial age, it was necessary to state only those characteristics that identified differences between and within buildings and types, in order to fully describe their houses. Further evidence that the buildings were not adequately strange or exotic to invite attention and interest is the lack of descriptions of

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<sup>8</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies. July 1712-July 1714.*, vol. 27 (London: H.M.S.O., 1926). 285.

<sup>9</sup> Hon. William Matthew, Gilbert Fleming, and Edward Esq. Mann, "Copy of Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty's Leeward Caribbean Islands in America & Gilbert Fleming and Edward Mann, Esq. for disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the island of St. Christopher's formerly belonging to the French.," in *Archive of St. Kitts* (Basseterre.: 1726).

the architecture by contemporary British travelers [see Section 2.11]. In addition, theories of traditional/vernacular architecture and material culture support this thesis and suggest that these short descriptions refer to commonly held mental models or concepts.

The synchronous data, its volume and similarity of format, lends itself to computer-assisted ordering. The sorting and analysis of the synchronous historical descriptions of domestic structures from the *1707/8 Commission Report* was accomplished by database analysis of the stated characteristics. The database did not include the Nevisian claims in order to examine a unique setting and population. The variables included location, owner's name, the stated number of rooms, the apparent number of rooms or cells of space, the materials of construction, the differing terminologies, the length and breadth of structure, the number of floors stated, the appendages, kitchens, outhouses, finishes, and the given values. In addition, the plan proportions of the buildings, and ground floor area were calculated and inserted.

Analysis of the database proceeded in incremental stages from sorting and examining single characteristics to looking at the relationships between two characteristics and then looking at the differences in ranges and terminology. Simple sorting of the database and graphs of the ranges of individual features indicated that there were distinct ranges of characteristics, categories, and types. The next level of examination of the domestic structures was the comparison of two variables of the domestic building claims, for example the value of building and exterior sheathing material, then finding other linked characteristics. This led to the revelation of further relationships and patterns of use. The result of the analysis is a statement about the



architecture of St. Christopher in 1706 as well as a tool or basis for interpretation of the remaining body of the accumulated historical data.

### 3.2 THE VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE OF THE MAJOR GROUPS OF SETTLERS.

In retrospect, it is evident that the seventeenth century brought major dislocations to the domestic building traditions of the British Isles and Europe. Nevertheless, change is a slow process and varies with social status and the distance from the fashionable center of London and the Home Counties. The house builders in the Leewards, in common with other pre-industrial societies, made their building decisions and ordered their setting according to their traditions, mental models and exigencies of their original locality and their personal status or resources.

Both the internal and external arrangements of domestic architecture are part of the bundle of traditions and tenets of a community. These traditions are held, consciously and sub-consciously, in the form of mental models<sup>10</sup>, schemata<sup>11</sup>, scripts<sup>12</sup> and tenets, which are related to social, cultural, geometric and other situations; they develop and mutate implicitly and over time from customs under new pressures, new stimuli or new

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<sup>10</sup> The term mental model is sometimes used to refer to the representation of a body of knowledge in long-term memory, which may have the same structure as the models used in reasoning. [Robert A. Wilson and Frank C. Keil, eds., *The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*. (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1999).] 525-527.

<sup>11</sup> Schemata are the psychological constructs that are postulated to account for the molar forms of human generic knowledge. [Ibid.] 729-730.

<sup>12</sup> Scripts are the sub-class of schemata that are used to account for generic [stereotyped] sequences of action. [Ibid.]. 729-730.

concerns. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, Renaissance ideals of order and symmetry were one of these tensions in English society. The mutations in the architecture reach a state of stability when “the problems cease to command active attention as deserving of new solutions”.<sup>13</sup>

Built space is composed of organizational units, functional spaces and features or “cues” that human cognition arranges in response to precise living patterns or scripts<sup>14</sup>. Some of these living patterns or scripts derive from the levels of privacy required by a specific culture to carry out certain functions; this may impose gradations of access to functional spaces and produce the hierarchy of spaces<sup>15</sup> that were evident in the post-feudal residences of the affluent in seventeenth and eighteenth century west Europe.

In this section, the domestic architecture is seen as a continuum, with mutations of types, as social processes built in space, as a spectrum with few defined limits. Literature indicates that the three-cell, longhouse arrangement or the extended farmhouse of Celtic origin<sup>16</sup>, is the ‘genotype’ of the traditional rural houses in Ireland, England<sup>17</sup> and extensive areas of Northwest Europe. The longhouse was not the sole ‘genotype,’ for there were, for example, unstable and insecure regions where fortified manor houses, bastels and pele towers developed. Their internal arrangement was vertical and similar to the military ‘genotype’ of the keep and castle with the family rooms on the upper levels

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<sup>13</sup> George Kubler, *The Shape of Time. Remarks on the History of Things*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962). 35.

<sup>14</sup> Jean Cuisinier, "Spatial Organisation.," in *Encyclopaedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World.*, ed. Paul Oliver (Cambridge, U.K., New York, NY.: Cambridge University Press., 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Monique Eleb and Anne Debarre-Blanchard, *Architecture de la vie privée, Maisons et Mentalité. XVIIe - XIXe siècles*. (Bruxelles: Aux Archives d'Architecture moderne., 1989).

<sup>16</sup> Henry Glassie, "Irish," in *America's Architectural Roots. Ethnic Groups that built America*, ed. Dell Upton (New York; Chichester;Brisbane; Toronto; Singapore: Preservation Press. John Wiley & Sons Inc, 1986).

<sup>17</sup> N.W. Alcock, "British Isles," in *Encyclopedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World.*, ed. Paul Oliver (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

for security. In addition, there were the flimsy or temporary structures of travelers, itinerants and landless persons. Notwithstanding the visual diversity of materials, form and size, each building type conformed to established spatio-functional arrangements until the seventeenth century.

This synopsis concentrates on the architecture of England because the manuscripts consulted were prepared for English audiences, the Crown and Councils, Parliament and the Courts of Law. The majority of the European population in the Leewards was Irish until the 1670's and as the major labor force and as free persons, they may have influenced the trajectory of the architecture. After the 1670's, the other major sector of the population was the West Africans; in English there are few publications other than those mentioned that deal with the topic. , The French and English lived in close proximity on St. Christopher, thus there is a review of trends in French architecture.

### 3.21 English domestic architecture.

Peace and security under the Tudors had produced a rich and varied building stock with a continuum from the humble one-roomed structures of the rural agricultural worker to the castles and palaces of the nobility. In addition, there were walled cities with wealthy burger establishments, military structures and the magnificent former Roman Catholic cathedrals. Nevertheless, rural structures were the largest component of the building stock, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the typical country dwelling had the tripartite arrangement of the 'longhouse', and, despite the removal of the animal byre, that end of the house retained its low status:

Common to all types of country-dwelling in Elizabethan England was the hall, 'house-place' or 'house-body', entered, as it had been for hundreds of years, at the end of one of its long sides where, in the larger houses, a wooden screen formed a passage across the end of the room; while smaller houses had simply a 'speer' or partition forming a rudimentary internal porch. The house developed at either end of this traditional nucleus, as well as above it.<sup>18</sup>  
[Figure 3.1]

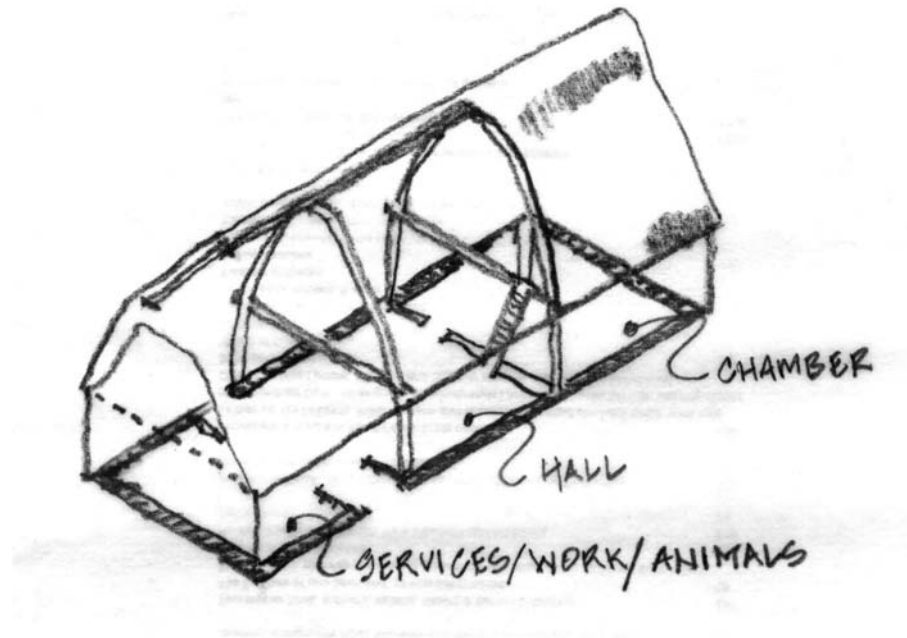


Figure 3.1 The longhouse type with cross passage and cruck structure. After Lyndon F. Cave, *The Smaller English House*. .

The hallmark of seventeenth century architecture was the Renaissance influence, which introduced symmetry and order, and the transition from the use of natural materials of the locality to brick construction. The writings of Palladio had great influence in Britain with the result that the desire for symmetry and order impacted both the elevations and internal arrangements and initiated the transition from single room deep

<sup>18</sup> John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain 1530-1830*, ed. Nicholas Pevsner, Pelican History of Art (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc, 1954). 103.

structures to double pile houses. [Figure 3.2] These new ideas put the traditional architecture under severe stresses.

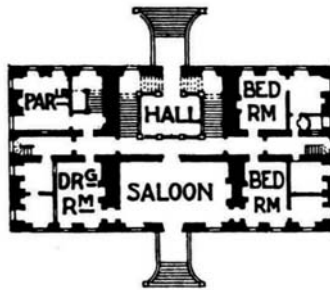


Figure 3.2. Ground floor plan of the double pile house, Coleshill, Berkshire, UK. (ca. 1656). [Banister-Fletcher.]

Previously the English built their houses and outbuildings, whether in town or country, of materials that were readily available in the locality: cob, stone, timber and combinations of them. In Devonshire and the western counties, even substantial houses, like the manor house in which Sir Walter Raleigh was born in 1522, were built of lowly cob.<sup>19</sup> Stone construction was common in upland and rocky areas, where timber was in short supply. In the affluent Southeast of England, heavy timber frame construction predominated with various found materials being used for infilling the ‘half-timbered’ houses. It was only when timber became scarce and expensive that ordinary people turned to the use of bricks and pantiles. At first, builders imported the clay products from

<sup>19</sup> Lyndon Cave, *The Smaller English House. Its history and development*. (London: Robert Hale, 1981).  
34. The birthplace, Hayes Barton Manor House, East Budleigh, survived into the twentieth century.

the Netherlands; however, by 1700 the English produced the products on their construction sites or near pits on the outskirts of towns<sup>20</sup>.

Roof structures were of timber in one of two traditions: cruck frames and coupled and jointed rafters. Thatch was the primary roofing material only in rural areas. The reason for this was that for centuries prior to the 1666 Great Fire of London, city burgesses around England had discouraged the use of thatch.<sup>21</sup> The alternatives were to plaster the thatch with lime, to install slates, stone or wood shingles or clay tiles. Cruck roof construction, which predates the Viking invasions<sup>22</sup>, was associated with large structures; the practice may have gone out of fashion in England when large size lumber was no longer available. The practice was, however, alive in the late eighteenth century when a number of these buildings were erected in the Lake District.<sup>23</sup>

The decline of the feudal system, which initiated a demand for privacy and specialized spaces within the domestic setting, precipitated the evolution of new variants of spatial configuration. The upper end, the family end, of the houses of the aristocracy developed sequences of specialized rooms, drawing rooms, chambers, bedchambers and closets, that were connected enfilade in the single room deep structure. The hierarchy of access to the various spaces developed the sequence called an “axis of honor”<sup>24</sup>. [Figure 3. 3a] Butteries, pantries, dairies and other work areas proliferated at the low end of the house, with the noisy kitchen at the extremity of that sequence.

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<sup>20</sup> Hugh Braun, *The Story of the English house* (New York: Charles Scribener's Sons, 1940). 99.

<sup>21</sup> Cave. 27.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 42.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 47.

<sup>24</sup> Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House. A social and architectural history*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978). 144.

The trend towards a multiplicity of rooms resulted in changes to the massing of buildings and the production of symmetrical layouts. [Figure 3.3b] Aristocratic buildings became elongated with large numbers of rooms, so that in the English manner, the buildings became extensive in a symmetrical arrangement, which was pleasing to the society, for “ever since the days of the medieval cathedrals great length had been thought specially conducive to grandeur”<sup>25</sup>. [Figure 3.4]

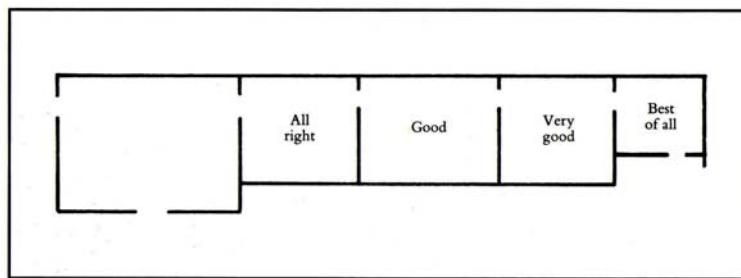


Figure 3.3a. The concept of the ‘axis of honour’. [Girouard].

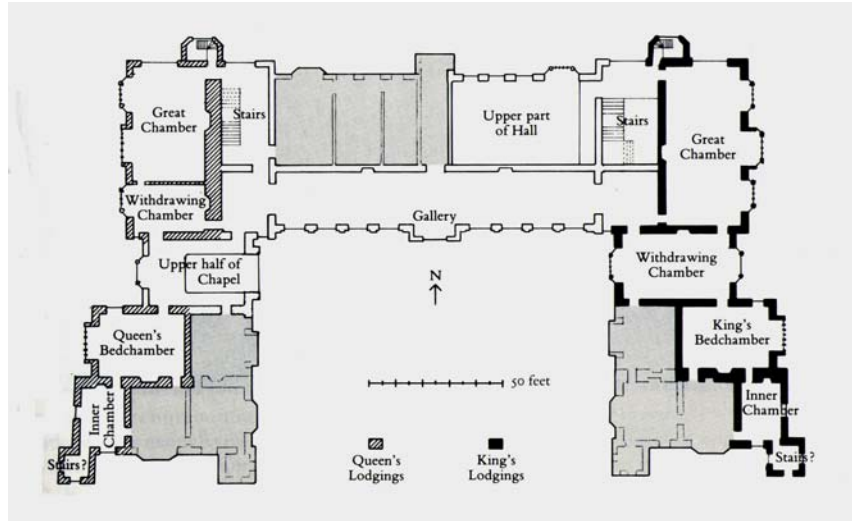


Figure 3.3b. A symmetrical layout and ‘axes of honour’ on the upper floor of Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, England (1607-12). [Girouard]

Figure 3.3. The concept of the ‘axis of honor’ and an example at Hatfield House. [Girouard. *Life in the English Country House*].

<sup>25</sup> Marcus. Whiffen, *An Introduction to Elizabethan and Jacobean Architecture*, ed. Sir Hugh Casson, Introduction to Architecture (London: Art and Technics Ltd., 1952). 32.



Figure 3.4. Blickling Hall, Norfolk, UK. The seat of the Howard family, which was extensively renovated in the seventeenth century by converting the medieval hall into a circulation area and by adding wings. (2005). [Hobson].

The traditional elevations and the indications of the high and low functional areas of the house were gradually replaced by symmetrical Renaissance elevations. For many decades, the location of the high end was evident from its elaborate windows or a decorated gable end. Nevertheless, in the early seventeenth century, in response to the architecture of designers like Inigo Jones, it had become fashionable to have a ‘formal’ house with symmetrical elevations and layout of the rooms.<sup>26</sup> This complemented the

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<sup>26</sup> Girouard. 120-180.



increasing privacy requirements because the symmetrical elevations did not refer to the locations of the family.<sup>27</sup> [Figure 3.5]

The new plurality of internal spaces led to the decline of the hall from its feudal place at the center of 'household' life to being a mere vestibule; the new spaces took over, piecemeal, the multiplicity of functions of the feudal hall. By the mid- seventeenth century in the most fashionable houses, the hall was little more than a symbol of the householder's civic status and sometimes was merely a circulation area.<sup>28</sup> The double pile houses mark the final demise of the hall because in residences like Coleshill, Berkshire (1658) by Roger Platt, the hall served to distribute the household rather than bring them together.<sup>29</sup> [See figure 3.2]

At the same time, landowners took control of the surroundings of their houses; they created symmetrically laid out gardens and enclosed what had been common grazing land. The result was that rural populations had no means to maintain their livestock.

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<sup>27</sup> Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry. 1480-1680*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999). 80.

<sup>28</sup> Roger H. Leech, "The Symbolic Hall; Historical context and Merchant culture in the Early Modern City," *Vernacular Architecture* 30 (2000). Girouard.

<sup>29</sup> Cooper.

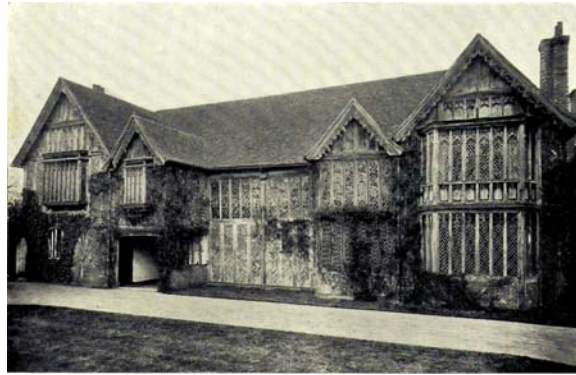


Figure 3.5a. Ockwells, Berkshire, England. Ca 16th century. [Braun].



Figure 3.5b. The Queen's House, Greenwich, England. Begun 1616. The Queen's House, Greenwich by Inigo Jones gave strong stimulus to the trend in symmetry. [Hobson]



Figure 3.5c. House in the Close, Salisbury, England. Ca. 1700. [Hobson]

Figure 3.5 Showing the evolution of the elevations of domestic structures over the seventeenth century from the Ockwells House to the House in the Close, Salisbury.

With the peace and security of Tudor times, the yeomen class had prospered; they were the wealthiest members of the rural community - apart from the hereditary aristocracy<sup>30</sup>. In the houses of the minor gentry, the yeomen and tradesmen in the towns who owned the land on which they built their houses, trends of the same provenance as those of the aristocracy became evident. However, the evolution took place within a compact footprint, which is not surprising in a household of modest means, where one of the strong generating rules of their architecture is practicality, because the labor of the householder produces the resources.

In the affluent Southeast and to a lesser degree in other regions, in the early seventeenth century, the average yeoman's house was typically of two stories with three rooms per floor, and perhaps a garret.<sup>31</sup> An even more affluent yeoman or squire could have a three-story house of nine rooms, three on each floor; however, the principal chamber remained on the ground floor.<sup>32</sup> Innovations in carpentry had enabled the village wrights to erect structures of greater height, and the influence of Renaissance ideals led to the household accommodation being a single roof. In addition, the population had adopted flues and fireplaces and abandoned the open hearths, so the volume of the open hall was no longer required and the hall could be floored to provide an upstairs chamber.

The newer houses, under a single roof, frequently boasted a projecting entry porch, near the center of the elevation<sup>33</sup>. In the settings of the yeoman and free-holder, a

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<sup>30</sup> M.W. Barley, *The English farmhouse and cottage*, Second impression ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1967).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 62-64.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 62-63.

<sup>33</sup> Braun. 72.

symmetrical arrangement of rooms evolved of the 'double parlor house' with a parlor on both sides of the hall, with or without a cross passage.<sup>34</sup> [Figure 3.6]

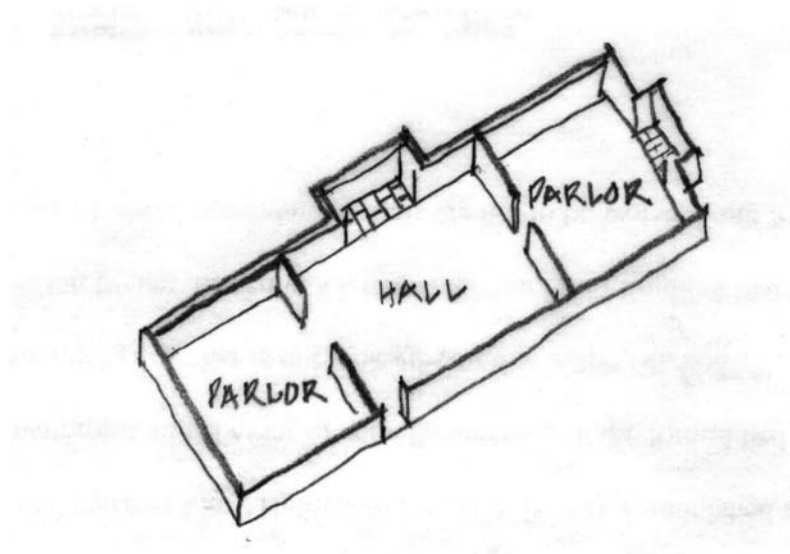


Figure 3.6. The plan of a double parlor house. After Braun, *The Smaller English House*.

Despite this effort to categorize the architecture of the various classes, the distinctions blur at the limits<sup>35</sup>, or traditions take muted forms. There were numbers of houses owned by squires, exceedingly wealthy yeomen and merchants where, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the high and low ends of the houses projected and formed E, L, T and H plans<sup>36</sup>; despite the increasing number of rooms these house did not ape the extensive forms of the aristocracy. Similarly, in quite modest houses, an affect towards extension frequently took the modest form of sheds or 'outshots'; these were generally added to the rear walls, for they were of a utilitarian nature.<sup>37</sup> [Figure 3.7]

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Cooper. 18.

<sup>36</sup> Barley. 141.

<sup>37</sup> Cave. 45.



Figure 3.7. House at Yalding, Kent, England, with an outshot. Ca 16th century. [ Braun]

In East Anglia, there was a distinct variant of the typical yeoman and gentry house, where the buildings had long, rectangular plans with few projections save the porch or porches, the vestiges of stair turrets,<sup>38</sup> similar to places like Sharrington Hall, Norfolk (16<sup>th</sup> century). [Figure 3.8] In other situations, there was a break with the longhouse geometry, for example, during Tudor times, when framed newel post staircases and spirals became popular in the better establishments. These staircases were placed in tower blocks at the rear of the hall when a prominent location was not available to display the joinery work, within the building. In lesser establishments the stairs

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<sup>38</sup> Cooper.

remained tight straight or doglegs in a secluded location for they were still considered functional, having been derived from ladders<sup>39</sup>.



Figure 3.8. Sharrington Hall, Norfolk, England, circa 16th century, but subsequently modified with additional turrets. (2005). [Hobson]

The landless husbandmen and rural workers, who rented the land on which they built, lived in the houses with the smallest number of rooms. In 1600, one fifth of the population lived in a house with two ground floor rooms, which were the kitchen, and the chamber; a few had a loft over.<sup>40</sup> One farmhouse inventory recorded that the kitchen was furnished with only a table and bench, two chairs, two cupboards, and the chamber with two beds and four linen chests.<sup>41</sup> Impoverished agricultural workers inhabited a

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<sup>39</sup> Stephen Calloway and Elizabeth Cromley, eds., *The Elements of Style. A Practical Encyclopaedia of Interior Architectural Details from 1485 to the Present.*, Revised ed. (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

<sup>40</sup> Eric Mercer, *English Vernacular Houses. A study of traditional farmhouses and cottages.* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office for the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, 1975). 28-29.

<sup>41</sup> Barley. 135.

one-roomed structure, which served for sleeping, working and cooking. These were eventually extended within the footprint by adding an upper floor chamber after a chimney flue was installed.

In the small English towns of the seventeenth century, the timber-framed buildings typically accommodated the business and residential functions on different levels. The workshop or business place on the ground floor opened onto the street; a reception room backed onto the workshop; a detached kitchen structure occupied the rear of the plot, but a small court separated it from the main structure; the remainder of the living space was on the upper floors. The houses were gabled and the orientation of the gable complied with the long practice of towns in levying higher taxes on those buildings with the long side to the street<sup>42</sup>. The smaller houses turned the narrow end of the house, the gable or gables, to the street; the larger establishments faced the gable away from the street and ran their long side to the public. In these larger establishments, there was a courtyard at the rear of the building surrounded by workshops and storerooms.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.22 Irish domestic architecture.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the building stock of Ireland had three major components: the tower houses of the kings and wealthy families, the low farmhouses and the temporary shelters or “tents” of pastoral people. The temporary

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<sup>42</sup> Cave. 35.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 55-75.



shelters of the pastoral persons were ephemeral rounded structures of birch and thatch<sup>44</sup>, which are well- known from early 17<sup>th</sup> century maps. [Figure 3.9]

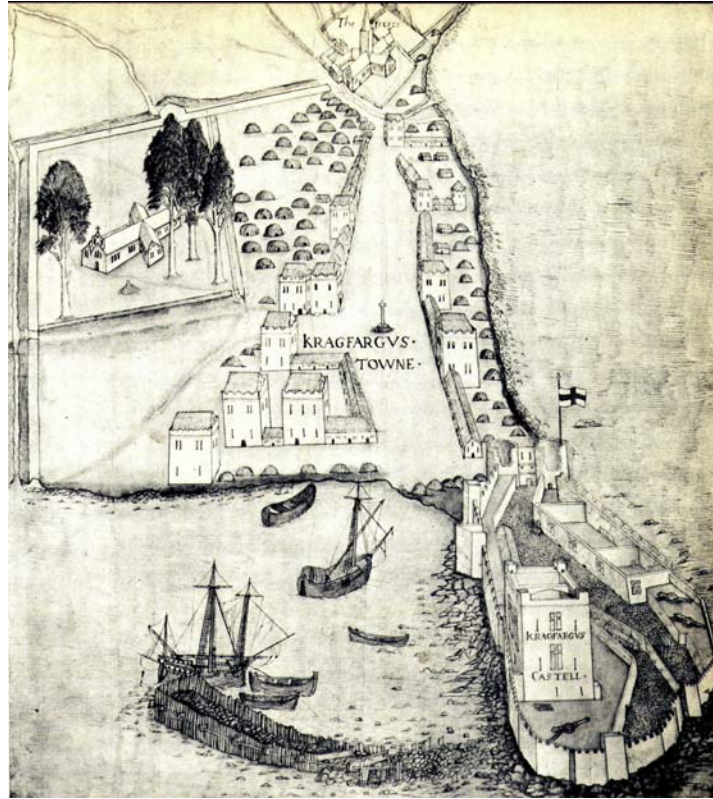


Fig. 3.9. Detail of map of late 16th century 'Platt of Knockfergus', Co. Antrim, Ireland.  
[Breffney & ffolliott. *The Houses of Ireland*.]

The plurality of kingdoms and the Tudor invasions served to entrench the baronial class of Ireland in the medieval practice of erecting the residences in the form of stone towers or keeps. This practice was particularly pronounced in the rural areas of Limerick, Galway and Cork, where large landowners built hundreds of tower houses between the fifteenth and late seventeenth centuries. In addition, in some of the small towns, wealthy burgers raised fortified structures to protect their possessions.<sup>45</sup> [Figure 3. 10] The

<sup>44</sup> Alan Gailey, *Rural Houses of the North of Ireland* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd., 1984).

<sup>45</sup> Brian De Breffny and Rosemary ffolliott, *The Houses of Ireland. Domestic architecture from the medieval castle to the Edwardian villa.*, A Studio Book. (New York: The Viking press., 1975). 19.



towers were freestanding or adjoined low two storey houses depended on the householders' resources; only the wealthiest lived in houses with between two and four interconnected towers.<sup>46</sup>



Fig. 3.10. An urban tower house. Mint, Carlington, Co. Kilkenny. [Breffny and ffolliot].

The humble rural population lived in small farmhouses of the longhouse or linear farmhouse type. Many occupied 'byre' houses well into the nineteenth century, whereas in England, by the seventeenth century, the animals had long been removed from under the roof of the household. Irish byre houses ranged from the humblest where humans and animals shared a single space<sup>47</sup>, to those with two cells, which were the majority, to those with three spaces; very rarely did single story houses have four or more units of

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 7-81.

<sup>47</sup>. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a byre house was typically 28 feet long by 17 feet wide.[Gailey. 142]

space. Commonly, once the house had achieved a size of three or more cells the kitchen was detached or placed away from the gable end.<sup>48</sup> The byre houses were one room deep and for the most part only a single-story high.

The retention of the byre reflects the economic priority of the rural Irish community: namely their cattle, which needed protection and warmth at night. For this reason, the humble rural householders retained the original use of low end of the house. The spatial structure of the interior was the longhouse, but due to poverty, the partitions were not physical. In some houses, the private family space, the chamber, was a bed-outshot near the fireplace in one or two room dwellings. In others, it was a loft over the byre.<sup>49</sup> In the majority of Irish farmhouses, the entrance leads directly into the kitchen, which is the main social space of the house and thereby an important social space of the community.<sup>50</sup> This may have developed when animals entered the houses, when it was essential to have doors in opposite walls.<sup>51</sup> The direct-entry arrangement is still predominant in Ireland. Nevertheless, lobby entry farmhouses have always existed.

The Tudor occupiers of the Northern provinces forcibly dismantled the “Irish” houses with the intention of replacing them with “English ones”.<sup>52</sup> Maps of the period record the Irish building traditions of three-bay, two-room, cruck structures of the early seventeenth century. [Figure 3.11] The sturdy low walls of the dismantled houses indicate that the transition from wattle construction to stone had started even before the seventeenth century, when timber became scarce. The stone walls of humble houses of

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 160.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 142-160.

<sup>50</sup> Howard Davis, "Plans," in *Encyclopaedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World*, ed. Paul Oliver (Cambridge, UK. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>51</sup> Gailey. . 144.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

the period were typically field stone, laid as random rubble, in clay mortar or dry, and plastered with lime; the roofs were thatched in the countryside<sup>53</sup>. Builders usually carried the internal, stone partition walls right up to stiffen the roof<sup>54</sup>; however, the earlier wattle tradition has been detected in ruined structures where timber posts remain encased in the stone partitions to support the roof.<sup>55</sup> A row of existing seventeenth century dwellings in Limerick, which were only recently described as “sturdy, simple houses with extremely thick [stone] walls and tiny windows”, indicates that humble urban buildings were similar in form to rural ones.<sup>56</sup> [Figure 3.12]

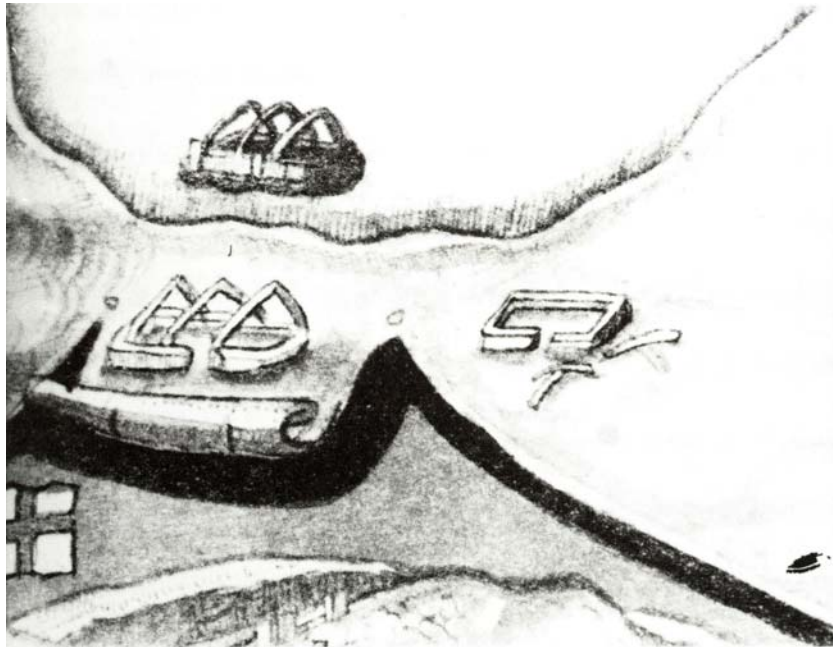


Figure 3.11. Dismantled Irish houses of circa 1600. Detail from a view of an attack, perhaps in Co. Tyrone in Hayes-McCoy, *Ulster and Other Irish Maps*. [Gailey, *Rural Houses of the North of Ireland*.]

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. 42-62.

<sup>54</sup> Maurice Craig, *Classic Irish Houses of the Middle Size* (London & New York: The Architectural Press Ltd; Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1976). 7-8. Barry O'Reilly, "Leinster, Munster (Ireland, E,S)," in *Encyclopaedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World*, ed. Paul Oliver (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY.: Cambridge University Press., 1997).

<sup>55</sup> Craig.

<sup>56</sup> De Breffny and ffolliott. 35.



Figure 3.12. Modest seventeenth-century urban houses at the Coole, Newcastle, West, Co. Limerick, Ireland. [Breffney and ffolliott.]

### 3.23 West African Domestic Architecture.

The problem of ascertaining the origin of the captured persons, which is different from the port they were shipped from, compounds the fact that very limited material is available on West African domestic architecture of the seventeenth century. Available contemporary literature in English and French about the seventeenth century architecture of West Africa focuses on the mud mosques and the ‘factories’ of the European traders. When researchers uncover information about the domestic architecture of the coastal, savanna and forested regions of West Africa, it is quite possible that the common thread will be that household life was communal in the open air of the compound. In areas that were heavily conditioned by Islamic and animist religions, there were family compounds or complexes where the male head, his wives and teenage sons had personal sleeping

rooms and sometimes kitchens. The construction materials were biodegradable because the walls were of timber or mud-brick, roofs of thatch or mud depending on the locale. However, this is conjectural.

### 3.24 Trends In French Architecture Of The Seventeenth And Early Eighteenth Centuries.

During the seventeenth century, affluent French society displayed a desire, similar to the English, for greater privacy and specialized space in their houses. The *disposition* of elegant Parisian *hôtels* of the eighteenth century had its roots in the fourteenth century when the simple life of the feudal period passed and ushered in a period of more complex social relationships. Over the centuries, the French had adapted the longhouse arrangement to new social scripts and transmitted these to the urban setting when it became fashionable to maintain an *hôtel* in a town:

*Les dispositions des châteaux, des palais et des grandes demeures féodales à la campagne, dont hériteront les hôtels urbains de l'aristocratie, obéissent malgré les différences évidentes de taille, de position et de luxe, aux mêmes principes de distribution.*<sup>57</sup>

[The aristocratic urban hotels inherited the internal spatial arrangement of the country houses, palaces and great feudal establishments. In spite of the obvious differences of size, site and luxury, they conformed with the same principles of spatial organization.]

The multifarious activities of the *salle* of a wealthy bourgeois of the early seventeenth century were recorded in French paintings of the period. Monique Eleb noted that Robert Boissart's (1602-1676) paintings of domestic scenes, entitled *Discordia*, *Concordia*, *L'hyver* and *La Vue*, depict a well-dressed family going about their daily life with a modicum of privacy in the *salle*. [Figure 3.13] . The *salle*, or hall,

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<sup>57</sup> Eleb and Debarre-Blanchard. 25.

was the place where family lived: they ate meals at a table near the hearth, children took their lessons, the family welcomed visitors and transacted business. Business associates, visitors and servants intermingled with the family. A door opened directly from the *salle* onto the noises and smells of the kitchen. However, the large bed, the *lit matrimonial*, had curtains and stood in the background. The houses were not arranged to accommodate the functions discretely, commented Monique Eleb-Vidal.<sup>58</sup>



Figure 3.13. *Concordia*, Robert Boissart (XVI siècle). [ Eleb-Vidal, ].  
A painting showing the multifarious activities of the urban *salle*  
in the early seventeenth-century.

By the mid-seventeenth century the arrangement of the urban house displayed the more private and comfortable arrangements that were first recorded in the grand country

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 22-26.

houses and noblemen's castles.<sup>59</sup> One of the earliest known examples of these innovations<sup>60</sup> was the '*Hôtel Jars*' by François Mansart (1648) where he adapted the *logis* arrangement of the late sixteenth century chateaux to a fashionable *hôtel* in Paris. The *logis* was a sequence of interconnected rooms for an adult, named after the occupant; in great establishments the *logis* included a *chambre à parer* [reception room] and *chambre de retraite* [for sleeping] and ended with a number of small rooms for latrines, a study or oratory.<sup>61</sup> [Figure 3.13] The service areas, the kitchen and stables stood away from the *corps de logis* in a wing perpendicular to the main body of the house, in order to keep the noises and smells away from the family. The small entrance vestibule, the hierarchical sequence of the enfilade ground floor rooms, and the separate staircases for the various users, reflects the essence of the spatial structure of Pratt's, Coleshill in England (1649-1657).

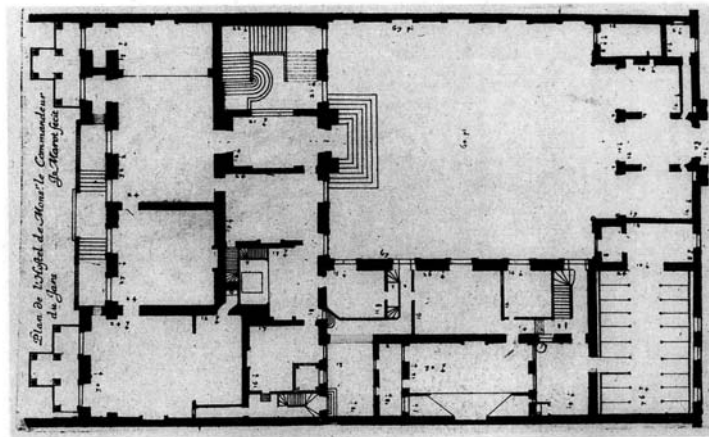


Figure 3.13. Plan of *hôtel de Jars*, Paris, designed by François Mansart. (1648).  
[Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France. 1500-1800*].

<sup>59</sup> Pierre Lavedan, *French Architecture*, trans. Penguin Books Ltd (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1979; reprint, 1956 revised). 194.

<sup>60</sup> Anthony Blunt, *Art and Architecture in France. 1500-1700.*, 5th ed. (Yale University Press., 1999; reprint, revised by Richard Beresford.).140.

<sup>61</sup> Mark Girouard, *Life in the French Country House*, 1st American ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000). 52.

By the late seventeenth century, the ground floor of *hôtels* and *châteaux* accommodated a set of formal *appartements*, with the upper ones being the most private. The difference between the *logis* and the more comfortable *appartement* was the specialized nature of the rooms in the sequence. The *appartement* of the ‘man of the house’ could include an *antechambre* or reception area, a *cabinet* for business affairs, the chamber for sleeping, a dressing room and a personal cabinet or oratory<sup>62</sup>. The development of distinct functional areas extended into the other areas of *hôtels*, and new descriptive terms, *grand sallon*, *vestibule* and *salle à manger*, entered the language. The new rooms took over the functions of the *salle*. The *salle* was no longer the center of life, but a vestibule or transition space that filtered the visitors to different zones according to their status. [Figure 3.15]. The earlier enfilade circulation system could not accommodate the multiplicity of rooms, so the need arose for separate routes and led to the insertion of staircases of the various classes of person. There was the grand staircase, which connected the vestiges of the upper and lower *salles*, services stairs, as well as those connecting the formal and private *appartements* of the adults.

The *disposition* or layout of elegant Parisian *hôtels* of the eighteenth century manifestly imposed greater distances between the different classes who used its spaces. This was evident in the more extended form of the hierarchical, horizontal *appartements*, and in vertical separations of living accommodation<sup>63</sup>. Perhaps it was the lack of a Magna Carta, in France, that explains the early division of the *salle* of grand *châteaux*

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<sup>62</sup> Blunt. 140.

<sup>63</sup> Girouard, *Life in the French Country House*. 51.



into two levels<sup>64</sup> with hierarchies of qualities of tableware and furniture to match, which practices the wealthy transmitted to the urban setting.

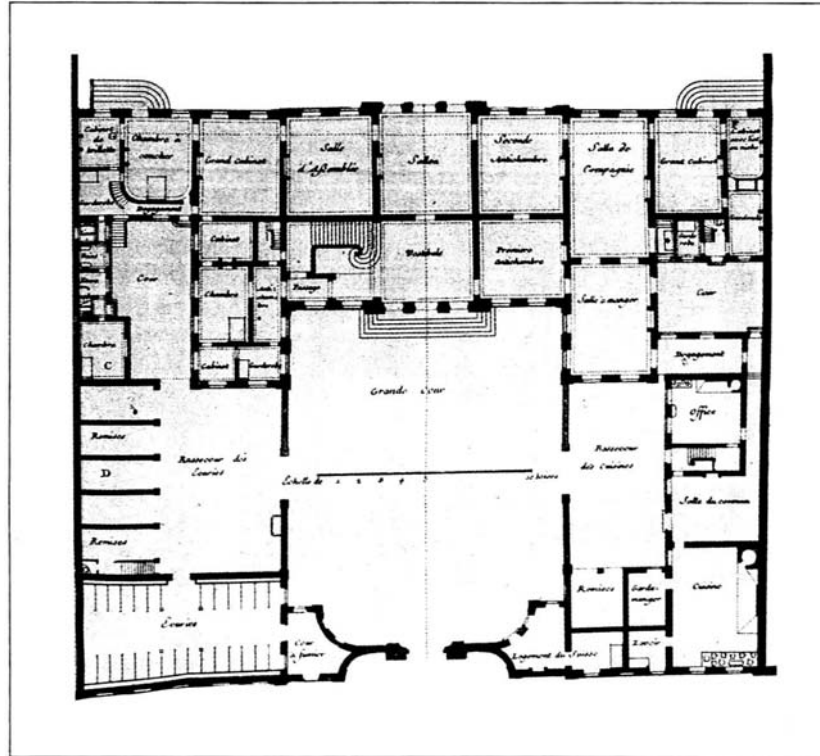


Figure 3.15. Plan of the ground floor. Hotel Vrillierie. Paris.  
Ca. 1720. . [Eleb-Vidal]

Contemporary discourse about the insertion of passages on the upper floors of *châteaux* indicates that many of the populace were aware of the implications of the new spatial disposition of their houses. Society had accepted corridors or passages for dividing and organizing the formal and public ground floors of *châteaux* and *hotels* in the late seventeenth century; however, when academic architects proposed inserting passages between the *appartements* on the upper floor, in addition to the enfilade circulation routes, this created an outcry. A corridor in the domestic space, among the chambers on

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. 47.

the upper floor in a country house was distasteful to many, and unnecessary thought

Blondel *fil*s:

*Ils [les couloirs] divisent la profondeur du bâtiment en deux parties; et que le service des domestiques ne peut s'y faire sans troubler le repos de ceux qui habitent les appartemens”*<sup>65</sup>.

[Corridors split the cohesion of the building into two; and this is only to ensure that the domestics do their work without disturbing the peace of those who live in the apartments]

Other more practical detractors foresaw that the new divisions would facilitate promiscuity<sup>66</sup>. The real issue was clearly the division of the symbol of domesticity and social cohesion, the interconnectedness of the private chambers.

### 3.25 SUMMARY

The intention to gain a new perspective on the early architecture of the Leewards requires the examination of archival material in reliable collections in the UK, the USA and Caribbean. The selection included major repositories, including the National Archives of Britain, National Archives of St. Kitts and the British Library with extensive collections of official seventeenth and eighteenth century manuscripts. The research included visits to about fourteen minor archives and collections in search of detailed information in personal or business correspondence. The historical material was primarily in the form of inventories and short descriptions and a small number of

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<sup>65</sup> Vincent Droguet, "Le couloir central dans la distribution: son apparition et son développement au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle.," *Bulletin Monumental* 160, no. IV (2002). 379. Blondel, J.-Fr. *Abrégé d'Architecture concernant la Distribution, la Décoration, et la Construction des Bâtiments civils Composée par Blondel fils architecte. Bibliothèque Mazarine, ms. 3691 vers 1740.*

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. 379.

drawings and official maps. The form is common for vernacular structures and the period because the owners had little need for detailed drawings.

The nature of the data lent itself to both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. It included a substantial number of descriptions of domestic buildings on St. Christopher that the French burnt in 1706. Statistical analysis of this volume identified significant patterns and characteristics of the architecture. These findings however appear incomplete or as only one part of a communication; they clearly referred to a common context or body of knowledge known to both the writers and readers. The study hypothesized that this knowledge was, in large part, the vernacular architecture of the British Isles where the majority of the European population originated. .

A review of the domestic architecture of the British Isles indicates that up to the seventeenth century, the 'longhouse' and its variants on the socio-economic scale was the primary spatial arrangement of rural houses. However, temporary structures and fortified residences existed contemporaneously. The decline of feudalism, Renaissance design ideals and depletion of the forests reconfigured European architecture from the seventeenth century forward. This was evident in the increasing number of functionally specialized spaces, classes of entertainment spaces and the requirement for a symmetrical or 'formal' arrangement of internal space and the elevations of buildings.

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## **CHAPTER 4. THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.**

This chapter delineates major features of the architecture and the settlement patterns in the Leewards during the seventeenth century. It starts when the islands were a frontier with Spain and continues into the early years of affluence due to sugar cane cultivation. It discusses relevant legislation as well as the landscape and looks at the churches, towns and public buildings, throwing light on the culture of the colonies. This section identifies, for the four islands, residential types and arrangements in the sequence of their appearance in the records. In addition, there is a discussion of adaptation and innovation in the architecture and the settlers' interest in organizing the immediate surroundings of their houses.

### **4.1 THE SETTLEMENT LANDSCAPE AND TOWNS.**

The adventurers and pioneers seized and held large tracts of land on which they lived and farmed with their servants; they did not try to establish towns in the early years. This resulted in the dispersed pattern of settlement that Sir Henry Colt noted, in 1631, when he wrote of Nevis, where “the houses and families of ye Ilanders standing farr of

one from ye other”.<sup>1</sup> This pattern persisted and it did have the practical benefits that, in the 1660s, de Rochefort rationalized was based on the convenience for management of one’s farm.<sup>2</sup> [See section 2.1]. However, the evidence suggests that the dispersal had more to do with the holding large tracts of land than with any altruistic concern for soil fertility. Indeed, it is apparent from the *Map of Montserrat. 1673* that the wealthy planters held the fertile land and built their houses at an elevation to capture the breezes. In time they apportioned the less desirable, low-lying land to poorer settlers and time-expired servants.

Up to 1668, the biggest agglomerations of buildings were groups of privately owned storehouses at shipping places. The location of the future towns at ‘Brisket’s Bay’ on Montserrat and ‘Morton’s Bay’ on Nevis suggests that the future port towns were originally some wealthy merchants’ compound. The records do not mention any efforts to lay out towns in secure locations away from the coast or to erect public buildings there. Governor Stapleton noted, in 1676, how detrimental it had been to record keeping that there was no courthouse “until they felt the lack of it and built a good substantial Sessions House and strong chests to secure all things in hurricane time”.<sup>3</sup>

During the entire period of this study, the Anglican and Protestant churches were at a distance from the clusters of storehouses or stood on a hill overlooking shipping

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Colt, "The Voyage of Sir Henry Colt, written at St. Kitts of a voyage begun 22 May 1631 giving descriptions of St. Kitts and Barbados, details of an attack by a Spanish fleet and advice to son to undertake a similar voyage. ," in *Colonising expeditions of the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1631). P.86

<sup>2</sup>Cesar de Rochefort, ed., *Histoire naturelle et morale des Iles Antilles de l'Amerique - The history of the Caribby Islands viz Barbadoes, St. Christophers, St. Vincents, Martinico, Dominico, Barbouthos, Montserrat, Nevis, Antigo etc in all XXVIII---with a Caribbean vocabulary*. (London: printed by J.M. for Thomas Dring and John Starkey and are sold at their shop.... 1666). 23.

<sup>3</sup>W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* (Burlington, Ontario: TannerRitchie Publishing, 2004; reprint, Reprint). 501.

places, similar to St. Antonia's church on the *Map of Mountserrat. 1673*. [Figure 4.1]. The inhabitants clearly preferred to separate their religious practices from commercial life, and there was generally a "scarcity of ministers, sometimes having none at all, and no registers kept of births, christenings or burials".<sup>4</sup> Most of the inhabitants paid lip service to the faith of the colonial power, and so did "most frequent the churches when they like the parson or a fit of devotion comes upon them".<sup>5</sup> Apart from the brick and stone church of St. Anthony in Montserrat, the churches were timber structures.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, when the French overran English St. Christopher in 1666, they "did transporte & carry away from ye English quarters all ye timber of churches"<sup>7</sup>; there were "six fair churches".<sup>8</sup> This supports the French travelers' comments about the simplicity of their construction. [See Section 2.1]

Post 1668, the newly established Island Councils began to designate towns for taxation purposes because the Councils were responsible for building and maintaining the fortifications.<sup>9</sup> It appears that the Lord Proprietor had provided only "palisaded trenches" or defensive earthwork fortifications.<sup>10</sup> Under successive governors, the Councils replaced the earthwork structures with stone fortifications to protect the considerable shipping riding at anchor. This was particularly evident in Charlestown,

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 501

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 501.

<sup>6</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8).

<sup>7</sup> V.T. Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, vol. Series II. LVI, Hakluyt Society (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925). 22.

<sup>8</sup> Sainsbury, ed. 273.

<sup>9</sup> See Machling's dissertation for the Nevis' record. T.C.S. Machling, "Protected Interests? The fortifications of Nevis, West Indies, from the 17th century to the present day." (PhD, University of Southampton, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> Sainsbury, ed. 319.



Nevis, for, apart from being the most productive sugar island, the island had been selected by the Royal African Adventurers as the place to establish their headquarters. It therefore was essential to confine external trade to specific locations with Customs officers in order to collect the 4 ½% export duty on which administrators depended. It was these shipping locations that eventually became the port towns. In the 1660's and 1670's, smuggling was so pervasive in the region that Sir Thomas Lynch, Lt. Governor of Jamaica, while visiting Montserrat, reported hearing that "most of the produce of that island and Antigua was taken to Statia by the Dutch".<sup>11</sup>

The only towns that the records show were laid out with a street pattern and lots were St. Johns and Falmouth on Antigua. The decision to lay out a town came close on the heels of an influx of Royalists settlers; the new inhabitants included William, Lord Willoughby and wealthy Barbadian sugar planters like John and Christopher Codrington, who may have introduced new design concepts. The Council took "the lands of the Widow Ghest lying at St. Johns Harbor....for the accommodation of a town to be built there".<sup>12</sup> On a part of the 300 acres acquired, the Council laid out a small area with streets and apportioned lots to petitioners.<sup>13</sup> [Figure 4.2].

The establishment and naming of other towns was a nominal act. Charlestown, the governor-in-chief's seat, is an example of the process. In 1671, the first governor-in-

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 226.

<sup>12</sup> *Laws, Regulations & Orders in Force in the Leeward Islands from 1668-1672.*

<sup>13</sup> Foundation Devonian, ed., *Extracts from the Codrington Papers pertaining to the family archives with its plantations in Antigua and other islands in the West Indies during the period 1649-1924.* (Calgary, Canada: 1988). The opportunity for establishing a town resulted from the burning of Antigua by the French in 1666/7, a subsequent Act of Parliament nullified the land claims of persons who fled to other islands during the invasion.

chief, Sir Charles Wheeler, designated a shipping place named the Red Storehouse<sup>14</sup> to be the main town of Nevis. Wheeler gave “his reasons for pitching upon this place rather than the old fort [Road]” being that it would prove less costly “to raise a good fort on the high rocky promontory of Pelican Point” than to upgrade the Old Road fort.<sup>15</sup> Then he named the area ‘Charlestown’ in honor of the King. There is no evidence of efforts to plan for orderly development, but the ‘town’ seems to have risen to its new status, for the next year he wrote, “there is not a port town in England now more orderly”. More than likely, his enthusiasm was allied to an increase in taxes collected, for he continued “in the Road were all sorts of shipping and now not one but British built...and trading according to the Act of Navigation”.<sup>16</sup>

There were few public buildings until the mid-eighteenth century; this was in large part due to the small populations, the insecure times and the inhabitants’ close links with Britain. It appears that the councils built jails, but no details of the former have been located. The Courts met rarely, according to Stapleton in 1676. Typically, a Justice of the Peace held Court hearings on each island only once a month, and the higher Court of General Sessions met twice per annum. The Admiralty Courts that dealt with piracy and salvage matters were ad hoc events.

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<sup>14</sup> It is very possible that the Redstorehouse was originally Lord Willoughby’s store house where military stores were held.

<sup>15</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-1674* vol. 5-9 (London: Longman & Co, 1880). 290.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* 339.



Figure 4.1. St. Thomas' Church, Nevis. (2007). [Hobson]. The nineteenth century church is on the site of earlier ones that were possibly of timber construction. The earliest surviving and legible tombstone dates from the 1640s. On the far side of the church is a cove. The nearest village is about a mile away.



Figure 4.2 Detail of the Hoemann Map of Antigua of 1725 showing the town of St. Johns. [Library of Congress]. The maps indicates the location of the town ,but not the cross streets.

Governor Stapleton recounted that the sole church in Falmouth, Antigua, “serves also for the Court House, their watching and warding against the Indians not permitting of their public buildings”.<sup>17</sup> The clerk of the Council kept the records until well into the eighteenth century. When a clerk died, the councilors rushed to his house to collect the records. The Councils rented space to hold their meetings and as late as 1723 in Nevis, Olivia William leased “a part of the house she dwells in...for the meeting of the Council and Assembly and a Court Hall”.<sup>18</sup> In 1726, the Crown Commissioners appointed to sell the former French lands in St. Christopher held their meetings in private houses in the various towns.<sup>19</sup> As for schooling, planters sent their children to be educated in England<sup>20</sup>, and despite the efforts of Wheeler and Codrington, the only acceptable options for humble or indigent European children were apprenticeship to a trade<sup>21</sup> or migration.

The legislative history demonstrates that, in terms of the development and management of the towns, in the late seventeenth century, the councilors and governments were primarily concerned about the risk of fire. Precedents in Britain may have played a part in this attitude, but it was primarily due to the hazard created by the planting of the highly combustible sugar cane. At first, the councilors directed their efforts to the cane fields and legislated in 1660 “against going through cane fields with

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<sup>17</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* 500.

<sup>18</sup> Nevis Council, "Minutes of the Assembly and Council," in *Colonial State Papers* (London: National Archives of Britain, 1723). 30 July 1723.

<sup>19</sup> Hon. William Matthew, Gilbert Fleming, and Edward Esq. Mann, "Copy of Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty's Leeward Caribbean Islands in America & Gilbert Fleming and Edward Mann, Esq. for disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the island of St. Christopher's formerly belonging to the French.," in *Archive of St. Kitts* (Basseterre.: 1726).

<sup>20</sup> Larry D. Gragg, "A Puritan in the West Indies: the Career of Samuel Winthrop," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series 50, no. 4 (1993).

<sup>21</sup> *Laws, Regulations & Orders in Force in the Leeward Islands from 1668-1672*. 95.

lighted pipes”.<sup>22</sup> By 1668, the Council on Antigua expanded their concern in an “Act for the punishment of those who shall fire dry canes”.<sup>23</sup> In 1682, Governor-in-Chief William Stapleton decreed “the Acts for the Leewards to be all alike”<sup>24</sup>. For this reason, it is reasonable to assume that all the Leeward Islands, similar to that of Nevis in 1671, eventually had legislation to prevent people from “making dangerous Fires in Charlestown and Morton’s Bay”.<sup>25</sup> The Act decries the “careless manner” in which town dwellers “kindle and maintain Fires for boiling pots and dressing victuals in the streets...very near unto the houses”, but evokes the image of a disorderly, yet lively, village.

#### 4.2 HOUSES IN THE PROPRIETARY PERIOD. 1624-1668.

The settlers erected houses in either the European or Amerindian building tradition, or a combination of them, during the first forty years of settlement. A number of wealthy settlers erected fortified dwellings or tower houses; others built structures similar to the Carib *carbets*, and modest persons had temporary European huts or *moiuna*-like structures. By the end of the proprietary period in 1668, there were a number of substantial buildings in brick, stone and wood.

In the early years when they feared an invasion by the Spanish, the settlers erected defensive dwellings in the tower house, *bastel* or *pele* tower, tradition on large

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Folio 93

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. Folio 6.

<sup>24</sup> "CO 153/3. Colonial Entry Book Vol XLVII.," in *The National Archives. Britain* (1681). Folio 13

<sup>25</sup> *Laws of Nevis. 1680-1773*. (Appointed to be printed by Thomas Horne, 1776). Page 6 No. 3 Enacted 10 February 1671 and confirmed February 8, 1681 and Oct 22, 1700.

holdings. As late as the 1666 hostilities, reports refer to “a strong house”<sup>26</sup> and ‘fortified houses’. These structures were typically castellated and continued the fortified manor house tradition of the Welsh marches and Scottish borders of England, and Ireland. The tower houses were defensive or protective of the owners’ wealth and property. The lower floor or floors were for services or for the vestige of the feudal hall, and the upper levels provided protection for the occupants.<sup>27</sup>

The French governor’s residence in St. Christopher is the first recorded example of a tower house in the Leewards and with three floors, may have been the tallest. [See Figures 2.3 and 2.4]. The chateau complex dates from around 1640, when de Poincy arrived to take up his duties as governor; it was not considered a public fortification, but was, according to his compatriot, “a noble brick house”.<sup>28</sup> The tower was still standing in 1671, when Sir Charles Wheeler dined there with the French governor following negotiations on the return of the English lands.<sup>29</sup> Du Tertre mentioned that the de Poincy chateau had set the standard of accommodation for the French governors on other island, from which one can infer that it was comfortable for the time.

The durability of the de Poincy complex and the fashionable French-style masonry of red bricks with dressed stone quoins tell of the high level of organization and

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<sup>26</sup> W. Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State papers. Colonial Series. America and West Indies.*, vol. 5, 7 and 9 (London: Longman & Co., 1880). 375 #1179.

<sup>27</sup> R.W. Brunskill, *Vernacular Architecture. An Illustrated Handbook.*, 4 ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 2000). 102.

<sup>28</sup> Cesar de Rochefort, *"Histoire naturelle et morale des Iles Antilles de l'Amerique" - "The history of the caribby Islands viz Barbadoes, St. Christophers, St. Vincents, Martinico, Dominico, Barbouthos, Montserrat, Nevis, Antigo, etc in all XXVIIII---With a Caribbean -vocabulary.*, trans. John of Kidwelley translated from the anonymous French edition of 1658 by Davies, translation ed. (London:: printed by J.M. for Thomas Dring and John Starkey and are to be sold at their shop... 1666). 9

<sup>29</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* 240.#586.

masonry skills available on island. Masonry was unknown to the Indians “who ...looked at it first with astonishment and having attempted to shake it” acknowledged that such structures could withstand hurricanes.<sup>30</sup> Masonry materials were readily available. There was abundant fieldstone on the islands, and contemporaries wrote that the French generally had easy access to *Roche à chaux* [limestone]<sup>31</sup> from Dominica due to their friendly relations with the Caribs there. The Dutch traders may have supplied the brick, but it does appear that the French made them on the island at some stage, according to a map in du Tertre’s work which shows a *briqueterie* near the *logis* of M.de Poincy.

In spite of its militaristic symbolism, the chateau displayed features of contemporary European fashion . It had a classically influenced appearance with columns, entablature and a flat roof, and the grounds, similar to Italian villas, made creative use of the steep slope with terraced gardens and thereby enjoyed panoramic views and cool breezes due to the elevation. [Figures 4.3] This ‘struck a chord’ with the affluent English settlers, who like their counterparts in Britain had developed an interest in prominent sites for large houses and for finishing the immediate surroundings with formal gardens.<sup>32</sup> This interest reappears in the correspondence of English inhabitants of the Leewards who built their houses in elevated positions and maintained gardens.

An “either patrician or defensive”<sup>33</sup> origin similar to the de Poincy chateau explains ‘States Castle’ and ‘Cove Castel’ in Montserrat, ‘Dover Castle’ in Antigua about

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<sup>30</sup> Rochefort. 11

<sup>31</sup> Jean Barbot, "Journal du Voyage de Guinee, Cayenne et Iles Antilles de l'Amerique.," in *Add.* 28,788. *British Library* (London: 1678-1679). The well-known animosity of the Caribs to the British prevented them cutting trees and obtaining limestone.

<sup>32</sup> John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain 1530-1830*, ed. Nicholas Pevsner, Pelican History of Art (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc, 1954). 95.

<sup>33</sup> Brunskill.102.

which Colonel Wheeler wrote in 1671 “Col. Strode letts to the king for the use of my government”,<sup>34</sup> Governor Stapleton’s towering house of the Hack Map (1686), the Battray tower house of St. Christopher in 1706 and ‘the old fort at Newcastle’ in Nevis.<sup>35</sup> Confirmation of the existence of this building type in the island colonies are the standing remains of Colbeck Castle in Jamaica and John Blaeu’s map of Bermuda (1625), which shows several small tower houses in a village setting.<sup>36</sup> [See figure 2.7].



Figure 4.3. An example of a fashionable terraced garden of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that influenced garden design in Europe and England. . Villa D’Este, Tivoli, Italy. (2005). [Hobson]

Included with a submission to the Council of Trade and Plantation was Governor Stapleton’s *Map of Mountserratt* (1673, which depicted ‘Col. Osbourne’s’ and ‘Coves Castel’ as castellated structures. [Figure 4.4]. The two towers of the former indicate its high status. Scholars have identified the structure named ‘Col. Osborne’s’ as ‘States

<sup>34</sup> Sir Charles Wheeler, "Letter to the King's Most Excellent Majesty..." in *Colonial State papers. West Indies and the Americas. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1671). 147-150.

<sup>35</sup> ‘Castles’ or ‘castels’ terminology is in keeping with the Irish terminology for the fortified dwellings of minor chieftains or well-to-do landowners. [Rothery, 1997 #395} 49.]

<sup>36</sup> Johann Blaeu, *Grooten Atlas* (1660).



Castel', which formerly belonged to Samuel Waad, a Dutch Protestant merchant.<sup>37</sup> The structure was built prior to 1654, which is when Governor Roger Osborne murdered Waad and appropriated the castle and two other plantations in a family feud. The description of 'States Castel' confirms that it was a residence and merchant house in a period when living and working were accommodated in the same structure:

A plantation whereon ye said Waad lived called States Castle, whereon is a stately built stone house richly furnished with all sorts of furniture to a great value being esteemed the fairest of any house in ye Caribba islands. In the which house was great store of merchandise, to what value we cannot express.<sup>38</sup>

'Coves Castle' was situated on a small hill, but it was in an exposed location on the coast. For this reason, the hall was elevated and entered from a ramp or ladder that could be withdrawn in times of danger. It was no longer private property in the 1670s when it was repaired at public expense and was referred to 'Coves Castel formerly',<sup>39</sup> by which time it was possibly being converted into a fortification.

The longest surviving tower house was at Newcastle, Nevis, recently named a redoubt; it stood until demolished in 1999. [Figure 4.5]. The location was similar to that of 'Coves Castle', which is near a cove or shipping place. Prior to demolition, British archaeologists had failed to find any evidence of military activity or any capability for

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<sup>37</sup> Donald Harman Akenson, *If the Irish Ran the World. Montserrat, 1630-1730*, The Joanne Goodman Lectures of the University of Western Ontario, 1997. (Montreal and Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997). 58-62. [According to Akenson Osborne retired to Ireland on his wife's estates after losing control of Montserrat in 1668 and was still selling his land in Montserrat ten years later.]

<sup>38</sup> Aubrey Gwynn, "Documents relating to the Irish in Montserrat," *Analecta Hibernica* 4 (1932). 223. *Laws, Regulations & Orders in Force in the Leeward Islands from 1668-1672*.

<sup>39</sup> P.C. Alers, Wm. Fox and other, "The Public Accounts for the Island of Montserrat," in *Stapleton Family Papers*. (Manchester: JRULM, 1672-1674 and 1677-1680.

military use.<sup>40</sup> In fact, one archaeologist stated that “the Newcastle Redoubt is an enigma within the forts of Nevis. From historical records it is known to have been old in 1706...however, no other historical records relating to its historical provenance have been found”.<sup>41</sup> [See section 2.3]



Figure 4.4a. ‘States Castle’ at ‘M’.



Figure 4.4b. Coves Castle at ‘Y’.

Figure 4.4. Details from the ‘*Map of Mountserrat..1673* in the *Blathwayt Atlas* showing small castles on the island. [Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University].

During excavations at Newcastle, archaeologists located the foundations of two adjoining structures, which appear to be subsequent constructions during the seventeenth century.<sup>42</sup> [See figure 2.6]. One of the abutting structures had a rectangular plan with a width of approximately fourteen feet and a flagstone floor; this arrangement is consistent with the practice in Ireland and other places in Europe of extending the tower with a

<sup>40</sup> Elaine Morris, Robert Read, S. Elizabeth James and Tessa Machling, with David F. Williams and Brent Wilson, "...the old stone fort at Newcastle..." The Redoubt, Nevis, East Caribbean., *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 33 (1999).

<sup>41</sup> Machling. 102.

<sup>42</sup> Morris.

farmhouse.<sup>43</sup> [See Section 3.2]. The flagstone floor suggests domestic use at a time when paved ground floors in Europe were the prerogative of the best houses. The other structure near the tower house was a circular cistern, which augmented an earlier method of collecting water from spouts at the roof. One possible reason for the significant longevity of the ‘old stone fort’ may be the quality of the bright white mortar, which was made from imported lime. Another reason may be its squat and low form.

There is no inference in the public record to suggest that the tower houses were public fortifications; the early fortifications were ‘platforms’, and were being rebuilt in “hardstone and lime” in 1669.<sup>44</sup> In 1671, when Sir Charles Wheeler took over administration of the Leewards, one of his first concerns was the upgrading of the fortifications; he wrote of the “pitiful thing flanked with palisades instead of bastions and a parapet of dead stake or ‘hoglemod” in St. Christopher, and the need to “raise a good fort” at Pelican Point in Nevis.<sup>45</sup> Colonel William Stapleton, Governor-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands (1672-86), furnished further support for a domestic and not military origin of the Leewards’ towers. He wrote about the fortifications of the Leewards, stating that “there are neither forts nor castles in any part of my government” apart from the “so-termed” forts in Nevis.<sup>46</sup> The fortifications did not extend to the isolated area now known as Newcastle.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Brian DeBreffney and Rosemary ffolliott, *The Houses of Ireland. Domestic architecture from the medieval castle to the Edwardian villa*. (New York, NY.: The Viking Press, 1975).7-81.

<sup>44</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* 166. #420.

<sup>45</sup> Sir Charles Wheeler, "Correspondence with the Council of the Lords of Trades and Plantations," in *Colonial State papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1672). 153.

<sup>46</sup> Col. William Stapleton, "Letter from Col. Stapleton with the Answers to Enquiries," in *Colonial State papers. National Archives of Britain*. (London: 1676). 147-149.

<sup>47</sup> The Hack Map of 1686 in the British Library clearly marks the five forts.



Figure 4.5. Newcastle, Nevis built circa 1640. (1995). [Hobson].

The wooden houses were similar to the *carbets* and other Carib structures and there may have been houses that were intermediate between the Carib and traditional English house forms. A Swedish military engineer who visited the Leewards prior to 1654 wrote about the houses on St. Christopher which had palisade walls:

The houses on the Island are, on account of the great heat, built only of boards on square posts, the walls as well as the roofs, and the wall boards not closer together than one can pass a hand out and in between each board in order that the air may be able to blow in to cool the people staying within.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Brian Dyde, *Out of the Crowded Vagueness. A history of the islands of St. Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla.* (Oxford, England: MacMillan Publishers Ltd, 2005). 47. Lindeström, P. *Geographia Americae with an account of the Delaware Indians based on Surveys and Notes made in 1654-1656.* (Philadelphia, 1925). 78.

Scholars have recognized that Amerindians deliberately erected palisade structures with spaces between the verticals to allow for air movement.<sup>49</sup> The pioneers had adopted this Carib practice for building and used spaced palisades for their houses. *carbets*. This practice had crossed into the English building before the mid-1600s, which Père du Tertre had observed in the English churches with the pierced enclosures. [Section 2.1]. The term ‘palisades’ was new to the English language in the early seventeenth century (circa. 1600)<sup>50</sup>, but the concept of a wall with vertical tree-trunks was not; it is an intuitive and practical method for the erection of shelter.

The form and types of wooden house are not evident in documents that were examined and date prior to 1668; the primary visual evidence for the *carbet*-like houses dates from after 1670. There were features or some element that distinguished the French houses from the English; this premise is based on the comments of French travelers that the settlers’ houses conformed to some cultural norm from as early as the 1650s. [See section 2.1]. However, the construction materials of the French and English were similar according to a deposition by leading colonists of St. Christopher. The councilors told about the French removing “the timber” of churches and houses following the 1666 hostilities at a period when ‘timber’ referred to structural members:

They [the French]...did transport and carry away from ye English quarters all ye timber of our churches and bells, ye cannon belonging to ye forts and demolished the said forts and all ye timber of their housen and buildings standing upon those plantations....with many other housen and buildings and coppers sold besides... the destruction of all ye timber in ye woods and mountains which made ye inhabitants incapable of rebuilding.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Turner, Jane.ed. *Encyclopaedia of Latin American and Caribbean Art*/ Grove Encyclopaedias of the Arts of the Americas. New York, NY: Groves Dictionaries Inc. 1999. 21.

<sup>50</sup> Websters Encyclopaedic Dictionary.

<sup>51</sup> Harlow, ed. Egaerton MSS 2395, folios 508-509b

The wooden houses were severely damaged in hurricanes, but were repaired in a short time. An example is Thomas Warner's house, erected before his death in 1649, which Sir Charles Wheeler disdained in 1671 because, he said, it was of wood.<sup>52</sup> A bystander had reported after the hurricane in 1666/7 that the house "was down to the ground...as well as the rest of the French and English buildings on the island".<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, William, Lord Willoughby, purchased the "sweet plantation"<sup>54</sup> for a governor's residence soon after, and, in 1671, the state of repair was not an issue.<sup>55</sup> Roofs sustain serious damage in hurricanes and both the traditional Carib and English roof structures would fail in high winds, but in different ways. The structural frame of the Carib roof with ridgepole was designed to remain intact even when the covering flew away. The paired-rafters of the English would tend to fall over if they were not braced. Paired-rafter structures are still evident in older buildings in the British islands where it is known as an English practice, but the roofs are boarded or braced in some manner. [Figure 4. 6].

The forests were depleted of large trees soon after settlement despite there being no record in the Leeward Islands of the wanton destruction of the timber stands that Colt saw on arrival in Barbados. This is not surprising if the settlers used tree trunk palisades for building or the heavy timber framing of post-medieval England. As early as 1644 on

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<sup>52</sup> Wheeler, "Correspondence with the Council of the Lords of Trades and Plantations."

<sup>53</sup> Egerton MSS 2395 folio 619-624. British Library.

<sup>54</sup> Vere Langford Oliver, "The History of the Island of Antigua - One of the Leeward Caribbees in the West Indies - from the first settlement in 1635 to the present. Volume 1,," (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 140 Wardour Street W, 1894). 54.

<sup>55</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* . 114. #296.

the driest island, Antigua, Governor Henry Ashton and the Deputies of Antigua were obliged to pass an Act to preserve their timber stands:

Noo person or persons whatsoever....shall after the publication hereof transport or cause to transport from this island any boards, planks, timber or timber trees of any kind without special licence first had and obtained from the hand of the governor...under pain of forfeiture.<sup>56</sup>

By the end of the proprietary period, the scarcity of large section timber drove the colonists to cut timber on the nearby islands with small populations, places like Tortola, St. Lucia and Dominica.

In addition to the timber houses there were other substantial houses whose names imply the use of brick in their construction, for example, John Jeaffreson's 'Red House' of the 1650's<sup>57</sup> and the original 'Red Storehouse' of Charlestown. If they were not of brick, they may have been painted red. The availability of brick to the English is known from Anthony Brisket's church in Montserrat "of stone and brick"<sup>58</sup>. The church was built in 1634, and stood until the French destroyed it in the 1666/7 raid.

There is an open question about the appearance of the "cotts" and "hutts" of the poorer settlers and time-expired servants<sup>59</sup> made from trees cut down while clearing the land.<sup>60</sup> The two terms 'cotts' and 'hutts' generally refer to single story structures, and one can assume that some of the settlers built houses and utilitarian structures in both the

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<sup>56</sup> *Laws, Regulations & Orders in Force in the Leeward Islands from 1668-1672*. Antigua. 54

<sup>57</sup> John Cordy Jeaffreson, author of "A Book About Doctors", "Brides and Bridals" etc, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century from Papers (AD 1676-1686)* (London: Hurst and Blackett, Publishers., 1878). 26.

<sup>58</sup> Sainsbury, 1860 #63 Vol IX p.240

<sup>59</sup> Rochefort. 177.

<sup>60</sup> Jeaffreson. P.17

*carbet* and *moiuna*<sup>61</sup> traditions of the Caribs. The *mouina* structure with its triangular ends may have developed independently in both the Caribbean and France because the A-frame structures used in French military camps are accepted to be of European provenance. Nevertheless, the *mouina* appears in illustrations of the French and English colonies well into the eighteenth century.<sup>62</sup> [Figure 4.7]

Latter -day versions of the *moiuna* built by the Caribs in Dominica in the 1950s resembled “a modern A-frame ... made up of two trellises joined by a ridge-pole held up by two strong forked posts planted in the ground”.<sup>63</sup> The trellises were of sticks covered with plantain or other leaves.



Figure 4.6 Paired rafter roof construction in the Alexis Knight house in Basseterre, St. Kitts. Constructed ca 1750. (2006). [Hobson]

<sup>61</sup> Katherine Coit, "'Caribe'," in *Encyclopaedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World*, ed. Paul Olver (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press., 1997).

<sup>62</sup> Dell Upton, ed., *Architectural Roots. Ethnic groups that built America*. (New York, Chichester, Brisbane, Toronto and Singapore: Preservation Press, 1986).. 62.

<sup>63</sup> Coit.



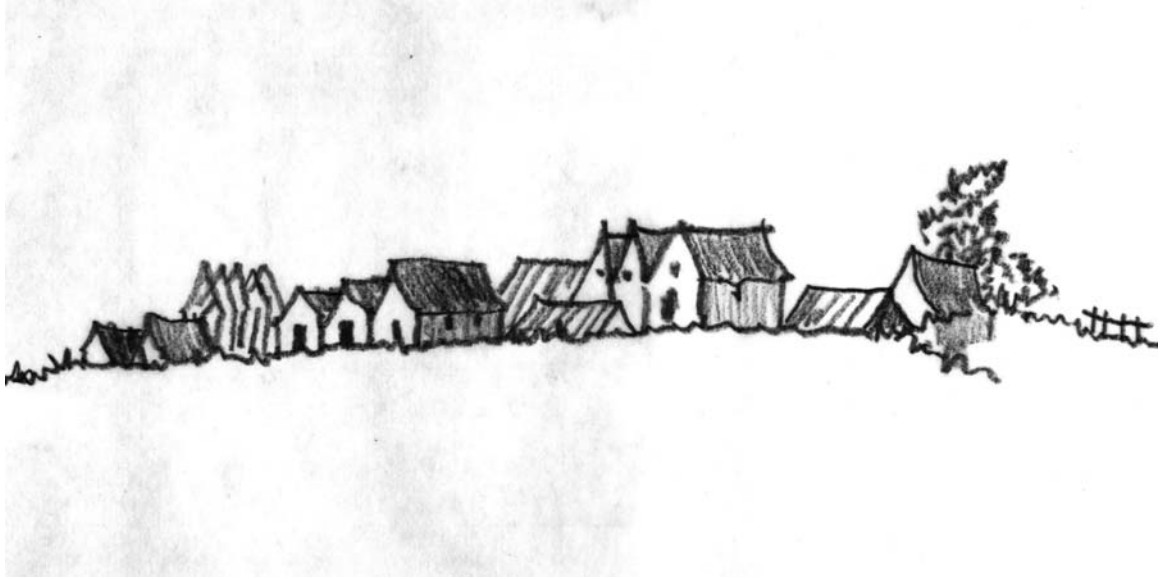


Figure 4.7(a). *Mouinas* and paired rafter construction evident at of Fort Louis, Martinique after Jean Barbot's *Journal du Voyage de Guinee, Cayenne et Iles Antilles d'Amerique*. 1678-79. [British Library].



Figure 4.7 (b). The *Mouina*-like structures of the English and French Caribbean islands in a detail from a French print of early Caribbean sugar-plantation showing a 'Carib-like' structure, circa. 1750. [Buisseret. Pl. 63]

Figure 7. *Mouina*-like structures and paired rafter roofs in the French colonies.

#### 4.3 ST. CHRISTOPHERS 1670-1700

After two decades of sugar production, the more affluent inhabitants of St. Christopher were more likely to build a version of a three-room English farmhouse than a tower house. There is evidence of adaptation to the climate and locale as well as the retention of traditional English patterns of behavior within and around the main residences. The size of the houses on each island reflected the volume of each islands' economy according to Governor Stapleton who reported that "trade and houses small".<sup>64</sup>

In 1676, when the smallest island, Nevis, was as wealthy as the other three Leewards combined<sup>65</sup>, Stapleton described the timber houses on the island:

In Nevis....Charlestown...there are good buildings and storehouses built with the country timber, not one exceeding 60 foot long by 20 foot broad, story and a half, hurricanes having taught the people to build low.... To all and most houses there are several sheds for the reception of goods imported and more particularly being of greater bulk, of goods exported, also for strength....In the country the houses are generally built as in the towns except the shedds, boyling houses and curing houses for the sugar and still houses....

He continued that the houses were very similar on all the islands except in St.

Christopher:

In St Christopher's, Sandy Point and Old Road, the places of trade, the building but ordinary of timber, covered with thatch, very few shingled.<sup>66</sup>

The settlers' houses of local timber were more in character with the single room deep houses of Elizabethan Britain than with the progressive brick, double pile houses then coming into vogue. Leeward Islanders had adapted their houses to the climate

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<sup>64</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, [Colonial Series] 1669-1675 America and West Indies* 500.

<sup>65</sup> CO 153/2 f.180. In 1676 Col. Wm. Stapleton valued the wealth of the islands thus: St. Christopher's (English) 67,000l; Antigua 67000l; Nevis 384,660l and Montserrat 62,500l.

<sup>66</sup> Colonel Wm Stapleton, "Letter from Col. Stapleton with the Answers to Enquiries.CO 153/2,," in *Colonial State Papers. Colonial Series. National Archives. Britain.* (London: 1676). 370-371.

because, like the Spanish in Jamaica, they realized that low buildings survived hurricanes better than high ones. [See section 2.11]. In addition, they recognized that sheds or outshots braced a single pile house during hurricanes. The more substantial houses had a three-part arrangement, which resembled the ‘long-house’ prototype of the yeoman class of Britain. In 1670, the hall was primarily for social activities because the arrangement of a kitchen that was detached from the main residence was already established. There may have been a loft where children and servants slept, but that type of accommodation was rarely mentioned.

The end of proprietary rule, and the investment of Island Councils post-1668, did not mean that the increasing number of sugar planters were secure in property-ownership. The chances were high that the planters leased the land they farmed from an ‘old inhabitant’ family that had retired to Europe on their rents. In the custom of the time, the landowners expected the tenants to make all the improvements necessary for their prosperity and comfort and to leave them in good condition at the end of the tenancy.

The first description of the interior of a planter’s house in the Leewards is dated 1670/1 and speaks of a three-room arrangement. John Pogson’s family recorded his original lease of a plantation in St. John’s Parish, St. Christopher, for probate reasons in 1686.<sup>67</sup> The sixteen year lease made it clear that Pogson was responsible for the erection and maintenance of all the structures necessary for living on and running a successful

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<sup>67</sup> His tombstone at Middle Island Church, St. Kitts, states that he was a captain (of the local militia) and was originally from Horncastle, England.

sugar plantation. In addition, Pogson was to hand over all these buildings, effects and servants in good repair at the end of the lease of sixteen years:

Build erect and sett up one good and fine = rentable dwelling = house of Three Rooms, one steward and cooking room, one good boyling house for 4 or 5 coppers, one still house with appurtenances....and the said Housing Buildings and Mill frame etc. (together with the demised land)... a cattle mill, four coppers and a still, still house and worm with two slaves.<sup>68</sup>

The second description of a wealthy planter's house is more complete because there is an inventory of the household effects, a copy of a site survey of 1682 exists along with an illustration of the house, and the location is known. The owner of Wingfield Manor was Christopher Jeaffreson, the son of Warner's lieutenant; he was wealthy and had been educated in England.<sup>69</sup> At age twenty-two, when he inherited a "large breadth of ground" in St. Christopher, he went out to the Leewards to take control of the 1000-acre estate granted to his father by the Earl of Carlisle in the late 1650's. In fact, his Uncle Samuel and family had inherited a 40-acre parcel near the island road.<sup>70</sup> The 'Wingfield manor house' of the survey was not the original Jeaffreson mansion known as the 'Redhouse,' which stood on the alienated land.

An affluent young man, Christopher Jeaffreson built himself what he called a 'manor house', at Wingfield, around 1676; an inventory of 1685 records it as "One

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<sup>68</sup> "St. Christopher's Deed Book," in *St. Kitts Archives* (Basseterre: 1698-1701). P24

<sup>69</sup> Three spellings of the surname occur in records of the family: Jeaffreson, Joaffroson and Jefferson. The latter spelling is on Samuel's tomb in St. Kitts, which was retained by his descendants in the USA.

<sup>70</sup> [Christopher Jeaffreson and John Jeaffreson, "Debenture made 9th day of February 1675 between John Jeaffreson of High Holborn, Middlesex, deceased and Christopher Jeaffreson of the County of Westminster Esq.," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College*. (Clinton, NY: 1675).] John Jeaffreson left his brother, Samuel, and later his son, Samuel, in charge of the properties in St. Christopher's.

Dwelling House with 3 Roomos” with a kitchen and steward room.<sup>71</sup> The similarity in type to the “good and fine = rentable house” of John Pogson indicates that this was the accepted standard for a successful planter in the late seventeenth century. The rental demand for such houses explains why Jeaffreson left his house with basic furniture and fittings when, after terrifying experiences in two hurricanes, he returned to live in England in 1682/3,. [See section 2.1] However, his agent, one Edward Thorn, proved to be a “treacherous and fraudulent steward of his property”<sup>72</sup>, and in 1685, the inventory recorded both the remaining and missing contents of the property, including the sugar works and merchandise. [Table.4.1]. The household furniture and fittings of the inventory relate to sleeping and dining and point to the three rooms being a hall and two chambers.

The ‘sleeping’ or bedroom furniture and fittings implies a hierarchical arrangement of chambers. There were two beds: the more elegant was “a feather bed & boulstor” and “bedstod”; the lesser was “one flock Bod and Bolster”. By tradition, the “suite of old curtains and valance”, would belong to the ‘higher’ bed because a well-dressed bed was a symbol of elevated lineage in Jacobean England. Over centuries, the large curtained bed of the master of the household had indicated the status of the family line; in royal establishments, it was the ‘bed of state’.<sup>73</sup> In non-regal settings, the family carved or painted their coats of arms onto the bedstead<sup>74</sup>, and lavished considerable sums on its curtains, valences, mattresses and pillows. In elegant houses of the seventeenth

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<sup>71</sup> Zachariah Rice and Lt. Francis Koric, "This schedule and award made at the 24th day of August 1685," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College* (Clinton, NY: 1685).

<sup>72</sup> Jeaffreson, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*. 232.

<sup>73</sup> Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House. A social and architectural history*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978).

<sup>74</sup> Harold Clifford Smith, "A painted Jacobean bedstead," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924).

century, nobody slept in the curtained bed, but it was an essential component of the more intimate entertainment spaces of elegant houses. Indeed the term ‘bedchamber’ versus the term ‘chamber’ came into use only in the mid-sixteenth century, when the chamber became essentially a reception room – thus distinguishing between the rooms in which one slept and one entertained.<sup>75</sup>

Even the bed linen of the house reflects the hierarchical culture, for the inventory included only two pairs of sheets, one fine and one coarse. The fine pair would have dressed the feather bed and the coarse ones the flock bed. Jeaffreson may have slept in the second bed in a bedchamber of a short ‘sequence of honor’. It is quite possible that the second bed was not much used, for there were two *hamačca* or hammocks in the house, which reflect adaptation to the climate and acceptance of the Carib custom by the settlers; indeed, Jeaffreson commented that “the most part here lye in hammackers [and], sit upon benches.”<sup>76</sup>

The furniture for ‘dining’ further reinforces the underlying traditional English practices and arrangements of the house. There were two tables with ‘frames’; the frames were customary, for they permitted the tables to be dismantled after dining for other activities to ensue in the same space. The plurality of tables was traditional and dated from feudal times when, in recognition of the different social classes who dined together, persons sat at tables according to their social status.<sup>77</sup> The large dining table

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<sup>75</sup> Girouard. 99.

<sup>76</sup> Jeaffreson, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*. 190-191.

<sup>77</sup> Girouard. 32.

was an innovation of the late eighteenth century.<sup>78</sup> The importance of the hall culture is evident in the fact that there were two tablecloths per table compared with the single set of sheets per bed,. The two “Dowlas” cloths were for the lower table, while the diaper cloths and ten napkins belonged to the higher table, in a hierarchical manner.<sup>79</sup> Six leather chairs, a cargo chest and two sealskin trunks provided seating for various classes of persons. The type of Bengali piece of furniture is uncertain, but demonstrates the fashionable style of the imported furniture.<sup>80</sup> The “sword for a servant” connotes not only elegance, but also intimations of baronial lineage. The presence of *ffuzos* or guns supports the aristocratic aspirations; they may have been displayed on the walls of the all. The two looking glasses would have graced the walls of the hall, symbolizing affluence, for at that time, 1681, little more than 30% of the houses inventoried in London itself had mirrors.<sup>81</sup>

Jeaffreson left the house well accoutered with pewter tableware that would have been stored in the “steward room”, which was similar to a pantry. There were place settings and dishes adequate for seating twelve persons. In addition, there were two “porringers” and a “bason”, which suggest the “wassail cup” or punchbowl tradition of the English. The extensive list of cooking utensils, most often held in the cook room, confirms the attention paid to dining. Based on the range of furniture, tableware and

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<sup>78</sup> Edward Lucie-Smith, *Furniture: a Concise History* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1979). “The big dining table with removable sections or leaves became fashionable in England only as late as 1780- before this it had been the custom to dine at several small tables.”

<sup>79</sup> Diaper: ME. OFR. The name of a textile fabric, now usually a linen fabric, woven with patterns showing up by opposite reflections from the surface and consisting of crossing diamond-wise with the spaces filled up by parallel lines, leaves, dots etc. Dowlas:

<sup>80</sup> Lucie-Smith. 69. Furniture imported from India become very popular in Britain in late 17<sup>th</sup> cent.. The piece was most likely a cabinet or buffet..

<sup>81</sup> John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort. Sensibilities & Design in Early Modern Britain & Early America*. (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press., 2001).. 122.

cooking utensils, the nature of the entertainment lifestyle suggests a manner of living similar to that recorded thirty years earlier in Barbados by a French priest, Father Biet. The priest wrote of the dining and removal of tables, the abundance of food and the passing around of a small silver cup, a porringer:

They cook everything very well and have excellent stews....When they dine, no one is forced to drink, one drinks willingly....But after one has dined, and the table has been cleared, a trencher full of pipes and another full of tobacco is put on the table along with a bowl full of brandy, into which is put plenty of sugar from the plant called *Noillice*. Egg yolks are also thrown in then this is set alight, and they let it burn down to two-thirds of its former volume. The host takes a little silver cup, fills it with this liqueur and drinks to the health of whoever is in front of him. After he has drunk, he refills the cup and gives it to the person whose health he has just drunk; this person does the same to another, and this procedure is continued until there is nothing left in the bowl....The afternoon passes thus....Our gentlemen found this life extremely pleasant.<sup>82</sup>

The 'manor house', according to the copy of the Wingfield survey of 1682, had a traditional Jacobean appearance with multiple gables with the center gable having a slightly swirling Flemish style or Baroque outline that was popular in East Anglia.<sup>83</sup> A number of smaller houses on the hill above the manor house had two gables. The manor house, with a cattle mill, a garden or pen and several other structures, was within a walled enclosure or compound; the wall was clearly not as much a protective measure suggested by archaeologists<sup>84</sup> as the style for the grounds of country houses in England. [Figure 4.8] Within the walls were about ten simple structures; the fact that they were in two

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<sup>82</sup> Jerome S. Handler, "Father Antoine Biet's Visit to Barbados in 1654," *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*. 32 (1967). 62.

<sup>83</sup> CJ, "Wingfield manor appertaining to Christopher Jeaffreson Esq. in St. Christopher's Island. "Surveyed April 1682 by M. Lord Rogers & copied and reduced from his Plan February 20th, 1819, by CJ.," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles collection, Hamilton College*. (Clinton, NY.: 1819).

<sup>84</sup> Dan Hicks and Mark C. Horton, "An archaeological Landscape Survey, Building Survey and Evaluative Excavation at Wingfield Estate, St. Kitts, Eastern Caribbean. Interim Report. Summer 2001.," (Bristol: University of Bristol, 2001).



precise rows reflects an effort to control the occupants who were most likely his indentured servants, but could have been Negroes. The Buor Map of St. Christopher (ca. 1700) suggests that there were walled enclosures of geometric or ‘Dutch’ gardens on the sides of several of the more substantial country/plantation houses, including Wingfield Manor House. [Figure 4.9]. The walled enclosures did protect the gardens from stray animals and the wind; however, the imperative for their construction was probably fashion and a territorial culture.

<b>Table 4.1 Excerpts relating to the house &amp; household effects of Christopher Joafferson.</b> <b><i>An Inventory of the Estate of Capt. Christopher Joafferson taken by us Lt. Zachariah Rice and Lt. Francis Kerle the 29th July 1685 by virtue of a Comission from the honorable the Governor to that effect unto us directed bearing date the 17th of this Inst. July. St. Christopher.</i></b>	
Ono Dwelling house with 3 Roomos.	An acct of what is diminished of the Estate
Six Loather Chairis	of Capt. Christopher Joafferson
Ono Table and fframe	since the acct sent him
a Bonels	by Ensign Edward Thorne taken this 27th day
Ono Hamacca	of August 1685 by us Lt. Zachariah Rice and
Ono Cargo Chest	Lt. Francis Kerle.
a Bedstod	
a ffoathorbed & Boulster	Ono Ladle worne out
a Square Table and fframe	Ono Hamacca
Twp Soale skin Trunkos	Ono suite of Old Curtains & Vallons
Two ffuzos	Ono flock Bod and Bolstor
ffour Pewter Dishes	Two lookonig Glassos broakon
soavon Powter Platos	Ono Powtor Chamber Pott lost
Ono Porringer	ffive Powter Platos
Ono Powter Quart Pott	Eight Powtor Spoonos
Ono Powter Pint pott	Ono porringor
Two Powter candlesticks worne out	Ono Bason
Ono brass candlestick	Ono case of Blackhaftod knivos
Ono pestle and mortor	Ono Iron dripping pan
Ono small Pairo of Stilliards	Ono earthon Loamonade Pott
ono Iron box	Ono hanging cupboard
ono'brafs skillot worne out	Two musquottos
ono ffrying Pann	Ono Grid iron
Three Iron Potts	One small Brafs Ladle
Three Musquoboons	Ono Pairo of Iron Crooks
Ono ffuzoo	Ono old Trunk
Ono Musquott	Two Saddlos and Bridle
Ono Pairo of Brafs Soales with wights	
Ono Iron Spitt	Two Dowlas Tablo Cloaths
ono Grindstone	Two Diapor ditto
ffouro Posts, Bridgbroo and Capifsos	10 Dyapor Napkins
A Cook Roome with Steward roome	Ono pairo fine Shoots
A chest	Ono pairo Courso ditto.
An oval Table and fframe	
A boyling house shingled.	

Jeaffreson failed to create a permanent and elegant setting for his manor house, which was probably due to the skills of his indentured labor force, who may have used construction materials and methods that could not withstand the Caribbean climate. Archaeologists recorded the stone platforms on the site that date from the seventeenth century; visual inspection confirms that they probably were the base of timber houses and provided level sites for construction.

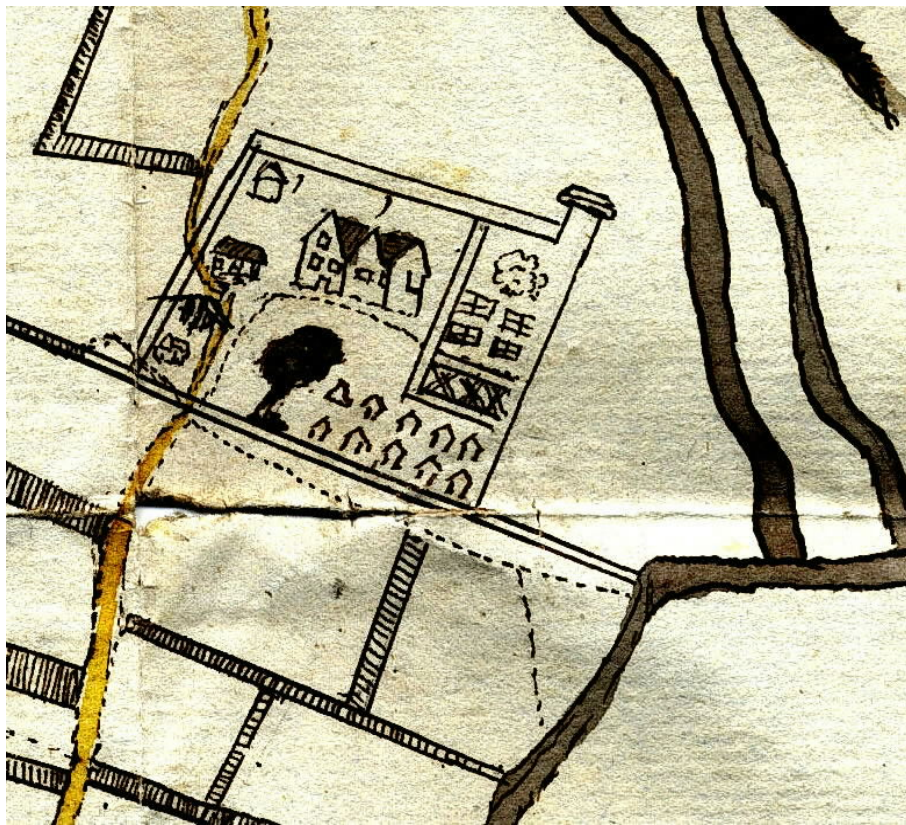


Figure 4.8. Detail of the copy of the *Survey Map of Wingfield Manor* showing the manor house compound. [Hamilton College Library].



Figure 4.9. Detail of the Buor Map of St. Christopher's showing the Jeaffreson Manor house at '44' with a garden on the north. [National Archives of St. Kitts.]

The fate of the Wingfield manor house is related to inappropriate construction technology. For one, Jeaffreson's correspondence records his continued endeavors to import labor from England and Ireland to build his house and to establish his sugar and indigo works; however, the clay mortars of the countries where servants originated did not survive the driving rains of the islands as became obvious in the hurricanes of 1681. [See section 2.11]. Second, Jeaffreson and his servants found the process of accumulating the stone so onerous that in 1678 he decided "considering the heaviness and chargeableness of our stonework, [I] resolve to carry on the rest of the work with

earth and turfe as was first intended”.<sup>85</sup> Thirdly, not only were Jeaffreson’s stone techniques inadequate, but, like many of the settlers, he had not yet learned how to hold down roofs in hurricanes. Thus, in 1681, he wrote that the hurricane, “increased until midnight....until within less than an hour of daybreake...I had not a house standing upon my plantation.... A great part of the roof of my dwelling-house began to fly away”.<sup>86</sup> In the morning, he found his house, the stonework of his sugar works and all his buildings to be in scattered pieces on the ground. He endured the hurricane sheltering “behinde that wall of my house, which was left standing”.<sup>87</sup> The damage to his house and his exposure to the elements by a hurricane in 1681 led the young man to retire to England:

It surprised none of his friends in the West Indies, in the June of 1682, to hear that having re-roofed the Wingfield Manor House and rebuilt his sugar works and seen his plantations recover from the disastrous effects of the great hurricane that..[he returned to live in England].<sup>88</sup>” In a similar manner, the major hurricane damage to the nearby Governor’s house in 1667 was due to the application of English construction practices that were not appropriate for the conditions.

The collection of Jeaffreson’s personal letters confirms the nature of lease agreements at the time, which may have had a detrimental impact on the long-term development of the architecture of the Leewards. The letters substantiate the intention of large property-owners, who returned to live in the Home Counties of England, to benefit not only from land rents, but also from improvements made by his tenants. However, the

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<sup>85</sup> Jeaffreson, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*. 221.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. 275.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. 275-277.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. 122.

tenants did not always comply, and they had little incentive to invest in durable buildings. Jeaffreson's first arrangement for his property with his unreliable steward, Edward Thorne, was a failure; other arrangements followed, and the three-roomed house did not survive into the 1690's - whether from dereliction, the earthquakes of 1689 or the French-English hostilities of 1690 is not clear. At this stage, Jeaffreson found a tenant for the land and "the bare land without house or slave was let for a hundred pounds sterling secured to be paid in London".<sup>89</sup> Five years after, in 1695, Captain Robert Henry Burrell leased Wingfield Manor for fifteen years. It was difficult for the men to agree on the terms, for Burrell needed a residence and "would have a house which he removes out of ye French grounds".<sup>90</sup> The issue was that Burrell demanded an adjustment for improvements made during the lease, which Jeaffreson found unreasonable:

The Ruines of my houses and workes are valuable in regard of ye materials they will furnish for new buildings for I well remember ye trouble and charge of bringing stones together for such uses. And ye spouts to convey ye water cannot be much Ruinated which cost me a considerable summe of sugar...ye indigo workes and all buildings standing."<sup>91</sup>

Jeaffreson prevailed, but at the end of the lease, Burrell and his partner Major Gillard left the "dwelling houses and the boyling houses, sugar works and mills ...destroyed as if an enemy had invaded ye estate".<sup>92</sup>

Eventually, in 1712, Michael Lambert leased the property, and it stayed in that family for well over a century until they foreclosed on it. In the lease, Lambert had

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<sup>89</sup> Christopher Jeaffreson, "Letter to Captain Matthew," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College*. (Clinton, NY.: 1695).

<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, "Christopher Jeaffreson to Captain Willett," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection*. (Clinton, NY.: Special Collections, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY., 1696).

<sup>91</sup> Jeaffreson, "Letter to Captain Matthew."

<sup>92</sup> Christopher Jeaffreson, "Christopher Jeaffreson to Mr. Micajah & Mr. Richard Perry," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College* (Clinton, NY: 1712).

agreed “to build... a refining house, a water mill and water spouts and outhouses”<sup>93</sup>; these were the beginning of the structures that are still standing. [Figure 4.10]. It is probably in the early eighteenth century that Lambert or his son-in-law, Charles Pym, built the high stone platform with the double flight of stairs that gave access to a two-story wooden house. The house, which was approximately fifty-four foot long by twenty-four wide, sat on top of cellar of the same size in living memory. Located as it was on the south-west corner of the platform, the house enjoyed an excellent view to the sea.

This attention to siting of the Wingfield Manor house and the arrangement of the surrounding areas was in keeping with English fashions and is consistent with Meniketti’s archaeological findings. The planters had devised a practical and elegant manner of building on steeply sloping land with the use of stone basements to level the land. Whether for guarding from an enemy or for trading, the inhabitants benefited from having an elevated outlook point which is apparent in Charles Wheeler’s proposal to erect a new “stone house ....for the governor” in St. Christopher in 1671. Wheeler spurned the location of Governor Warner’s house adjacent to Wingfield; he proposed building on the crest of the ridge of hills where he would have a view towards Antigua and over the French town of Basseterre.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*, "Letter to Richard Merriweather," in *Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection* (Clinton, NY: Hamilton College Library, 1713/4).

<sup>94</sup> Wheeler, "Letter to the King's Most Excellent Majesty..." Note: Lord Willoughby had bought the house of Thomas Warner as a residence for future governors.





Figure 4.10 The early-eighteenth century aqueduct at Wingfield Estate constructed under Michael Lambert, Charles Pym et al in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. (2006). [Hobson].

#### 4.4 MONTSERRAT- 1673

The *Map of Mountserratt. 1673*<sup>95</sup> in the Blathwayt Atlas portrayed the island some forty years after the introduction of sugar cane cultivation, when large land-owners and merchants had grown wealthy. It illustrated the diverse society that existed in the agricultural economy; there were English, Dutch and enslaved Africans<sup>96</sup> on the island, but the population was nearly 70% Irish.<sup>97</sup> [Figure 4. 11] The population ranged from the large sugar planters, who were leaders of the local militia, through modest farmers to subsistence farmers. The time-expired servants were tradesmen, sailors and subsistence farmers or lived on small farms raising cash crops like indigo and cotton. [See section 2.3].

The size and appearance of the residences reflected the spectrum of the society and the house forms of the early settlement period; in addition, the building styles and techniques record the ongoing efforts of the affluent to integrate the traditional building forms with fashionable trends from Europe. Most construction materials were found in the region, and a community of independent artisans erected the buildings and produced the furniture and fittings to complete the structures.

It was a segregated landscape with the small subsistence farms packed in among the dry areas of St. Patrick's Parish in contrast with the large sugar planter houses, which sat on the higher slopes of the fertile land near the port towns. [Figure 4.12]. The

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<sup>95</sup> Jeannette Dora Black, ed., *The Blathwayt Atlas; a collection of 48 manuscript and printed maps of the 17th century relating to the British overseas empire in that era, brought together about 1683 for the use of the Lords of Trade and Plantations.*, 2 vols., vol. v1. The maps. --V2. Black, J.D. Commentary (Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 1970-75). Map 30.

<sup>96</sup> J.A. George Irish states that the first Negroes arrived in Montserrat in 1664. {Irish, 1973 #404}

<sup>97</sup> Riva Berleant-Schiller, "Free Labor and the Economy in Seventeenth-century Montserrat," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., Vol. 46, no. 3 (1989). 544.



leading inhabitants used their influence to ensure that the ‘ riotous’<sup>98</sup> Irish were settled away from their fertile and well-watered land. Until 1668, land was held by patent granted by the Lord Proprietor; hence, the freedom dues of time-expired servants were adequate only to acquire land by rental or share-cropping, and not to petition for a grant of fertile land from the Willoughby Lords Proprietor or the Commissioners in 1670.<sup>99</sup>

The marked boundaries of farm lots and cane-pieces reflected the society that was determined to establish boundaries and assert control of their farmland. The processing of the sugar cane encouraged the division of land into cane pieces or fields, with the result that the landscape appeared ordered.<sup>100</sup> The larger houses were surrounded by several cane pieces, whereas small holders and subsistence farmers typically built on their single bounded lots, the houses were towards the middle of the land. There was no effort to develop farming villages. The clear delineation of property was, in part, a response to the Commission of 1670, which required the establishment of clear boundaries, in the fashion of the time.

The towns were all on the coast; they comprised little more than a huddle of storehouses servicing the import and export trades.

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<sup>98</sup> Hilary McD Beckles, "A "riotous and unruly lot": Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713.," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series., Vol.47, no. 4 (1990).

<sup>99</sup> Akenson. 53.

<sup>100</sup> When sugar cane is ripe, it must be harvested, ground and boiled within a few days, or else it will become rancid. In order to balance the quantity of ripe cane with the processing capacity of each plantation, sugar estates were divided into “pieces” which were planted, weeded and cut in a progression.



Figure 4.11 The 'Map of Mountserrat, 1673. Map 30 of the Blathwayt Atlas.  
[Permission of the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University.]

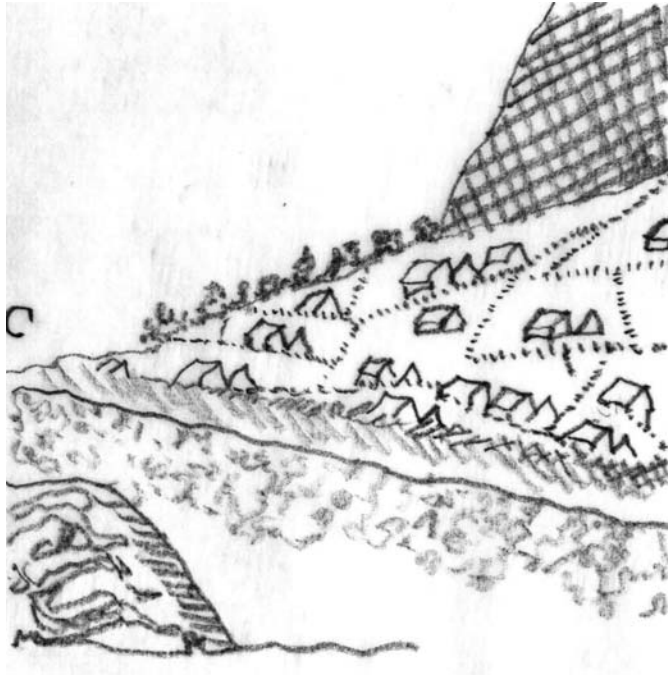


Figure 4.12. Houses in St. Patrick's Parish after the *Map of Montserrat*. 1673.

#### 4.4.1 The 'Towns'.

One of the first Acts of the Montserrat Assembly under Governor William Stapleton, in 1668 was for the “speedy building of a town at Briskett's Bay”.<sup>101</sup> The governor obviously wished to ensure that his property was protected by a town that was to be established at the cove below his substantial property. The Act “for reducing the trade of the island into three certain towns” came two years later<sup>102</sup> in an effort to improve tax collection. There is no evidence of laying out streets or plots for the three designated trading places of Plymouth, Brisketts Bay/Stapletown and Kingsale. The

<sup>101</sup> *Laws, Regulations & Orders in Force in the Leeward Islands from 1668-1672*. 73. 19 Sept 1668.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* 82. 29 Sept. 1670. The act began with the high-sounding preamble: “...there is a great necessity for the building of a town in this island for the good and safety thereof....a law was most required for such towns to be builded in this island for the good....(at) Briskotts Bay”.

three were in existence prior to 1668 and were primarily agglomerations of storehouses for merchants and planters.

The largest public building on the *Map* was “Ye Costom Houïs” (H) with a lookout tower which dominated the square of the main town, “Plüymouïth” [G]. [Figure 4.13]. Seven or eight buildings lined three sides of the square, and it is possible that the public whipping post, planted or re-planted in 1679, as well as stocks stood in this area.<sup>103</sup> Except for the buildings on the square, the remainder of the settlement was dispersed along pathways straggling in various directions from the square. The merchant house, ‘States Castle’, stood on the outskirts of the town, and the church of St. Anthonia (I) <sup>104</sup> sat on a rise overlooking the town. The simple rectangular plan of the church with side entry porch and without a tower was similar in form to other Anglican churches in the Leewards at that period; however, this was the finest church, according to de Rochefort, being constructed of brick and stone and furnished in cedar and scented woods.<sup>105</sup>

The smaller buildings of the port town, whether houses, taverns, stables or storehouses, lay closer to the water than the larger ones, which was in keeping with the practice of allocating undesirable land to the poorer classes. The uptown buildings of Plymouth were few and large. Only one building, a substantial one, had windows, which may indicate that it was residential. It was a relatively large, 1½ story house, end-gabled, with symmetrically placed dormers in the garret, with two entrances on the street that

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<sup>103</sup> P.C. Alers, Wm. Fox, and others, "The Public Accounts for the Island of Montserrat," in *Stapleton Family Papers* (Manchester: John Rylands Library, Manchester University, 1672-74 & 1677-80).

<sup>104</sup> Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series. 1661-.1674* “....only two churches ever built,....”.

<sup>105</sup> Rochefort. 19.

might indicate that it was a business place. The other large structures in Plymouth appear to be sugar stanchions or storehouses, for they had no windows. With few exceptions, the long side of the houses faced the street. One of the few seventeenth century or early eighteenth century buildings in Plymouth that was extant before the volcano erupted in 1995, resembled the buildings of the town on the *Map*. The low, single-story stone building, though modified over the years, displayed the rough, sturdy masonry skills of the Irish. It ran with its long side to the street, and may have been plastered in its original state. [Figure 4.14].

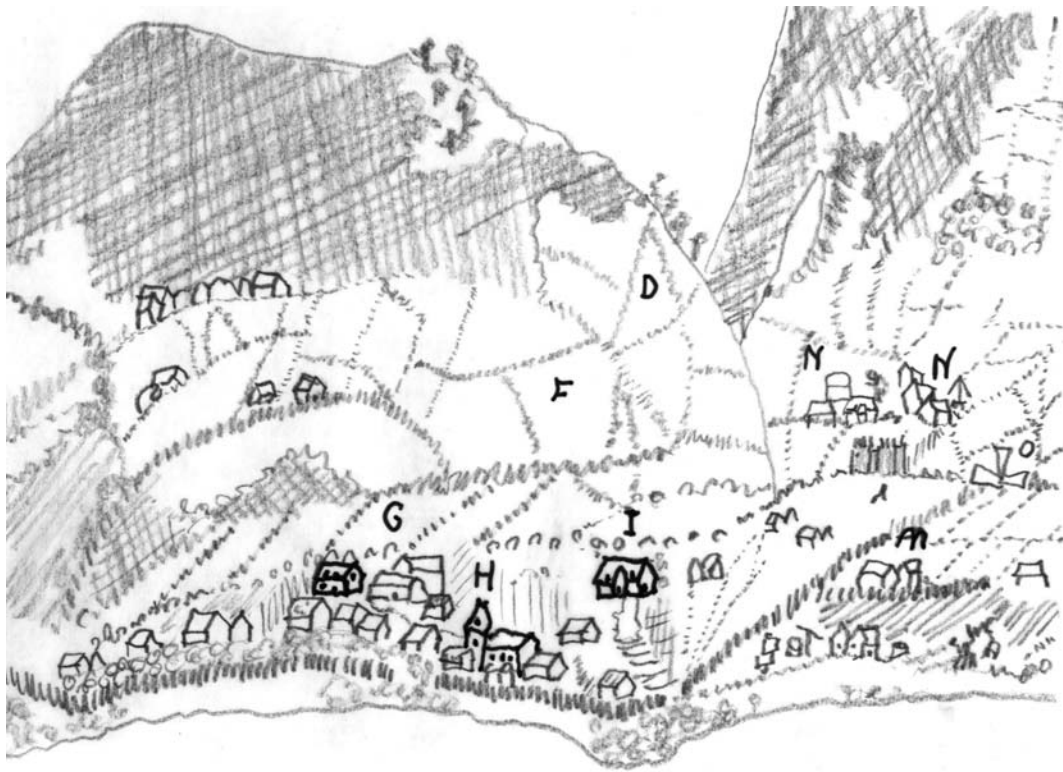


Figure 4.13. The town of Plymouth [G], the church of St. Anthony [I] and the surrounding countryside. After the *Map of Mountserrat, 1673*.



Figure 4.14. A late seventeenth-century store in Plymouth, Montserrat.(circa 1995).  
[Courtesy of the Montserrat National Trust.]

The ‘town’ of “Kinsaile” along the coast from Plymouth, was the center of the Irish population, but was also little more than a cluster of small houses lining a road. [Figure 4.15] . Possibly in reaction to the Irish collusion with the French in 1667, a new fort (S) was under construction in an effort to defend against invasion. The form of the half moon of the fort, substantiates the difference between public fortifications and tower houses.

The third ‘town’ or trading place, Stapletowne, was the seat of civil authority<sup>106</sup> because this was the location of “ye Cefsions & ye prifon hoüs” [B]; it was on the other bank of the Belham River from the houses. [Figure 4. 16]. Three buildings stood together near the shore and depicted various building practices on the island including heavy

<sup>106</sup> Lydia Mihelic Pulsipher, "The Cultural landscape of Montserrat, West Indies, in the Seventeenth Century: Early Environmental Consequences of British Colonial Development." (PhD, Southern Illinois University, 1977). 60.



timber or cruck framing with thatched roofs, symmetrical facades with cross-gable or porch entry, and the austere symmetry of the early Renaissance in England. Only the Sessions building, with its four roof frames still without a finish, can be positively identified because it is recorded as being under construction in 1673. The remainder of Stapletowne was several small buildings, huddled together near the roadstead below the vast estate of the governors, Brisket and Stapleton, and protected by the half-moon fort with three round towers.<sup>107</sup> This small settlement served to provide a frontline of defense against the invasion of Waterworks estate from the sea; in 1669 Stapleton replaced the name Brisket with his own.

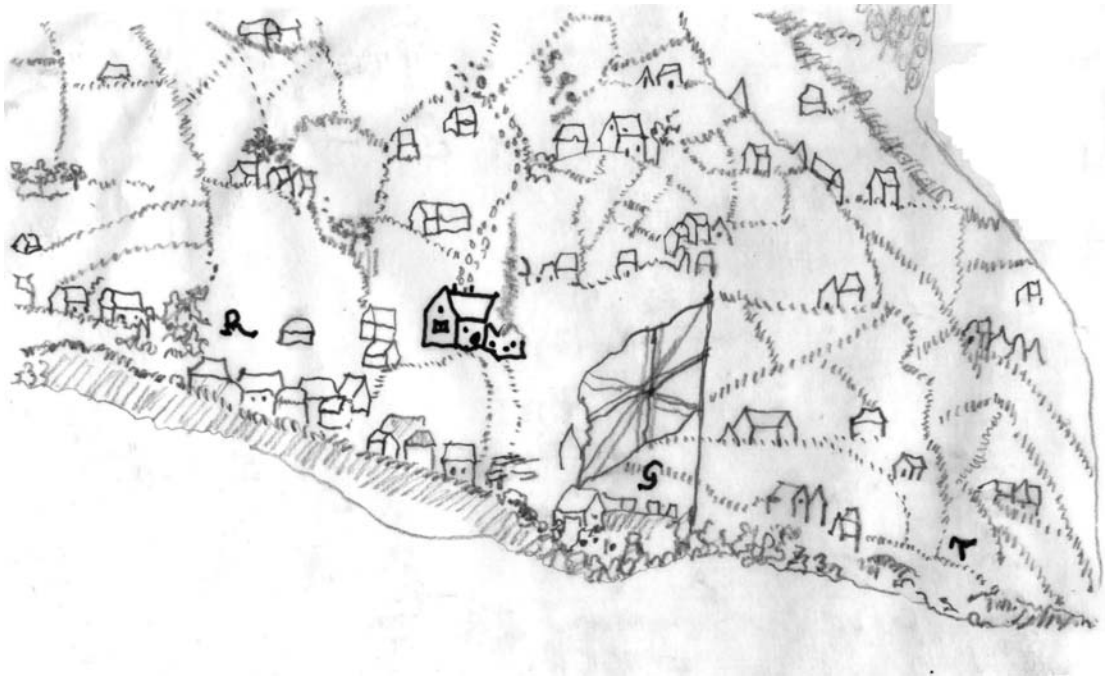


Figure 4.15. Detail of the showing the town of Kinsale [S] and St. George's parish. After the *Map of Mountserratt*. 1673..

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<sup>107</sup> Note: The size of the Union Jack may be related to Stapleton's need to emphasize the loyalty of himself and the predominantly Irish, Roman Catholic population, to the Crown.

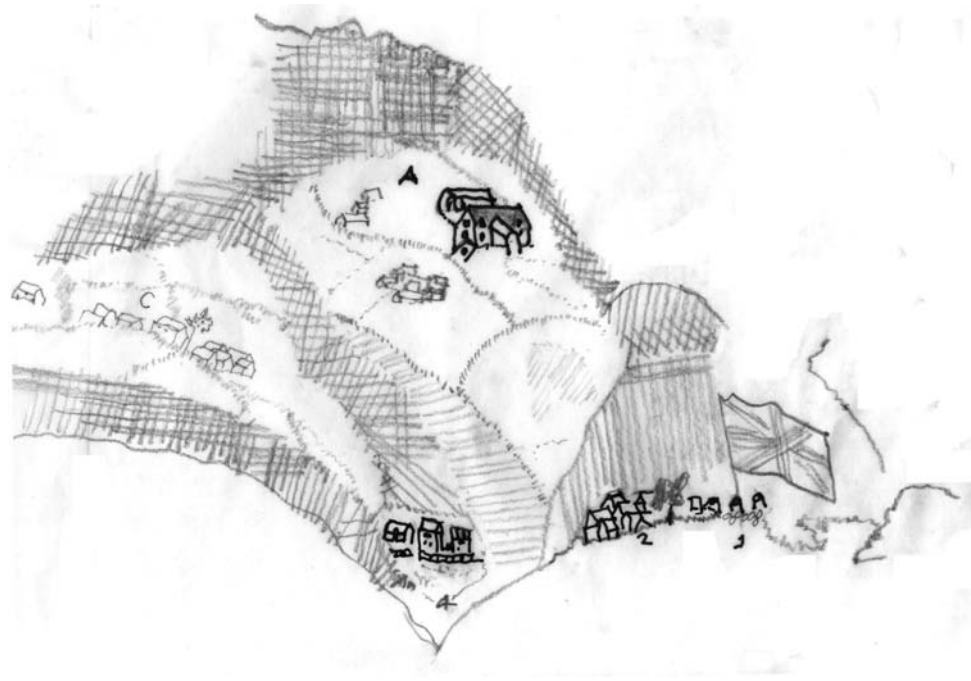


Figure 4.16. Stapletowne and Governor Stapleton's plantation. After the *Map of Mountserratt. 1673.*

#### 4.4.2 The Construction of Public Buildings.

The Public Accounts of Montserrat of 1672-80 tell about a bustling construction community of tradesmen and artisans working with local or regional materials. Public building was executed through a multiplicity of small contracts and piecework arrangements; in some cases, the public purse paid for both the accommodation and meals of specific workers. The men sawed timber and made shingles on site; others did blacksmithing off site and supplied nails. Sailors brought limestone to the bay, but another team carried it to the storehouse. William Cox, the clerk at that time, recorded several small contracts in August 1673 when “Nathan Cox and his crew” and “Henry Good and his crew” had sawn “planks” and “sleepers”<sup>108</sup> for the Sessions House; another

<sup>108</sup> “Sleepers” may refer to floor joists. Elderly carpenters in the Leewards used the term ‘slippers’ into the 1980s.



crew did the “squaring” of the timber. The Clerk paid them by the piece, in cash as well as hogsheads [large barrels] of cassava and lime, bread, and barrels of mutton<sup>109</sup>.

The Sessions House in Stapletowne was under construction in late 1673. There is no indication of whether the public owned the site of the building; it is possible that Stapleton was the landowner. The Sessions House roof was the main activity on the site according to the record of payments in the “Publick Accounts” of that year.<sup>110</sup> The structure had four heavy frames, possibly crucks, and a thatched roof. The carpenter, Patrick Hoy, worked on the frames, but when it was time to erect them in August, he got the assistance of two other carpenters who lived in paid housing “when they propped up the session house”. John Adams also did carpentry work on the project and he thatched the Sessions House roof; thatch was plentiful in Montserrat and there was even an area named Thatch valley on the *Map*. The Accounts include several purchases of limestone and a few of fabric for sifting the lime; this suggests that the walls of the Session House and other structures were finished with plaster. Towards the end of the project, the Public Clerk engaged joiners to make the furniture, the tables and benches for the courtroom out of “sweetwood” and “cedar board”, which woods are reminiscent of the sweet smelling wood in St. Anthony’s church earlier mentioned by de Rochefort.<sup>111</sup>

The building connected to the Sessions House by low walls was one of the most fashionable on the island due to its classically- influenced austere symmetry and low-pitched roof; however it was probably the prison. [See figure 4.16] Though there is inadequate information to ascertain whether this was actually the prison, what is known is

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<sup>109</sup> {Alers, 1672-1674 and 1677-1680 #400} 1673.

<sup>110</sup> {Alers, 1672-1674 and 1677-1680 #400} 1672-74.

<sup>111</sup> {Alers, 1672-80 #400} 1673.

that the prison was not on public property. The 'Publick Accounts' record rental payments to Mrs. Carroll for the prison house "for ye yeare 1675" and, in January 1678, "in balance for 3 years Rent for ye prison house and a whipsaw". This peculiar lack of publicly owned buildings was a factor in the Leewards until well into the eighteenth century. The public leased buildings on a short or long-term basis, and made improvements; the arrangement is consistent with the practice of land rent, which was discussed in reference to Christopher Jeaffreson's property in St. Christopher.<sup>112</sup>

The prison and the adjacent un-named building were constructed of more durable materials than the thatched Sessions House under construction. The public accounts cover the completion and maintenance of the prison house as well as "ye fort house" near Stapletowne over seven years, and indicate that the prison roof had a shingle finish. Thomas Hocter had started making the shingles in 1673; Cook, Cartwright and his master joined him later to saw planks as well as to make shingles. Both the Fort house and the prison had iron windows, some of which were sash windows for Henry Blake supplied "34 -- of iron...for ye windows in ye fort house at 5 lb each" in February;<sup>113</sup> and in April the clerk paid for "sashing ye windows in ye fort house". Then Mead & Co. were paid "for to make barrs for ye dining room windows" of the Fort House. There is a barely decipherable record of "200 lights" or "200 eights" for the prison house

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<sup>112</sup> The practice of improving rented property was acceptable, even when using public funds, for the Publick Accounts show that earlier in December 1672 the "Commissioners"<sup>112</sup> met in rented accommodation, and that the floor of that space was paved in December 1672 meanwhile a chest, stools and table were being made. It is clear from these items that the floors of even the best accommodation were often not paved or covered.

<sup>113</sup> {Alers, 1672-80 #400} 1673.

windows, which suggests that the windows were glazed; if not, that was not unusual for there was such a practice in poorer Tudor establishments.<sup>114</sup>

The doors and windows were the focus of the elaboration of the public buildings and carpenters decorated the wooden doors of the prison with large nails. In early June 1679, Edward Herbert provided “200 ten<sup>d</sup> nails for ye prison doores” and on 26<sup>th</sup> of the month another “150 six<sup>d</sup> nailes to ditto”. [These would have been similar to rose head nails.]. Denis Glossam not only made the bars for the dungeon, but the “spykes for ye fedder boords of ye prison house”. The term ‘fedder boards’ is interesting because it either refers to weatherboards for the gable ends or to present-day ‘feather boards’, which have a feathered edge and are used on parapet walls to throw rainwater into the gutters. If the latter was the case in 1673, a parapet roof detail that prevented the uplift of shingles in high winds was already in use; this detail was appropriate for the middle of the three civil structures at Stapletowne. Other evidence of the quality of finish of the buildings was the purchase of a whipsaw for pierced work and, in 1679, the payment for the “ruff” or base plaster coat of the building.

The public accounts mention construction in both stone and timber, but there is little visual differentiation of the building materials on the houses of the *Map*, nor indication of the stone or brick foundation walls typical of wooden buildings. Stapleton suggests that stonework was in general use until the earthquake of 1672, at which time the inhabitants turned to timber construction, except around the furnaces of the sugar works. Another reason could be that stonework was labor intensive and required the

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<sup>114</sup> Stephen Calloway and Elizabeth Cromley, eds., *The Elements of Style. A Practical Encyclopaedia of Interior Architectural Details from 1485 to the Present.*, Revised ed. (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). 22.

fetching of limestone by boat from another island or up the coast, hauling it up from the seaside and sifting “ye country lyme”; all this had to be completed prior to employing teams of masons to lay the masonry. The process included several separate trades and was time consuming; the overall cost included payment for food like the cassava bread for a team of masons, the bread for the other masons, and for “victuals, mobbie [a local drink] and pons [buns] for carpenters” of the Public Accounts.<sup>115</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Domestic structures.

Fashionable and symmetrical houses of the leaders of the society co-existed with substantial structures dating from the early period of settlement; the larger houses illustrate the evolution of house types from vernacular forms to more academic or classically- influenced designs. The governor, the members of his council or officers in the local militia owned the large houses on Montserrat, the majority of which were associated with sugarcane plantations. The houses, however, were quite modest in comparison to the more wealthy islands according to Stapleton:

In Montserrat...the trade there is but small – and accordingly the houses small as in their number but as strong as elsewhere. In the country built as before.<sup>116</sup>

The larger plantations were identified on the *Map* by the names of the landholders’ and descriptions like Major Thomas Caines’ plantation, Johnathan Simons and -- Jr. Davis water works and Captain Bentley’s his house and ‘werk’. The range of houses on the

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<sup>115</sup> Alers, Fox, and others.

<sup>116</sup> Stapleton, "Letter from Col. Stapleton with the Answers to Enquiries.CO 153/2.." Folio 370-371

island in terms of size and appearance reflect the social and economic spectrum of the inhabitants.

The large houses of the *Map* displayed vernacular building traditions of the British Isles and the Caribbean; there were defensive tower houses, *carbet*-like structures with round ends, a house with chimneys and clustered groups of buildings. ‘States Castel’ and ‘Coves Castel’ represent the defensive tower house type; they were discussed in an earlier section of this study. [See section 4.2] In 1673, Coves Castle was obsolete as a residence and the public had taken it over, presumably for a military purpose suggested by its location. If one can draw inferences from names, Pieter Coves’ family lived in a small, formal house on a large plantation [M]; the house had a dormer over the entry door to give a center emphasis to the elevation. [Figure 4.17a] ‘States Castel’ did not lend itself to military use because it was on the outskirts of Plymouth, which location was common for residential merchant houses of the time.

Major Thomas Caines’ [I] somewhat isolated house displayed Carib features. The large house had a central cross-gable or entry porch, however, one end of the house was round while the other had a gable. The house of Caines’ neighbor, John Elys [H], was very similar in appearance with a central cross-gable or porch and a round end facing in the same direction as the first. Both houses manifested an effort to integrate practical Carib techniques with the fashionable ideas of symmetry. These examples are the earliest visual evidence found, in this study, of the retention of the *carbet* form in English houses. [Figure 4.17 b & c].

The house with chimneys was “the former dwelling house of Captain Booth”<sup>117</sup> in 1673 and the largest residence near Kingsale [S]. [See figure 4.15] It appears ‘old-fashioned’ not because it had an outshot or projecting wing, but because the entry door was asymmetrically located and it had two chimneys. This is the only house on the Map shown with chimneys and they were centrally placed. Did the chimneys connote some authority in the manner of the French governors’ houses? It is more probable that the chimneys were indicative of the “farmhouse cooking arrangement” where family members and loyal servants prepared meals in the heart of the house. That era had passed in Montserrat of 1673 and in the more elegant residences the servants prepared meals in a structure detached from the main house.

Nathaniel Read’s plantation house [P] near Kingsale enjoyed an elevated site between Plymouth and Kinsale. [Figure 4.18] The formal 1 ½ story, end-gabled house with a central porch was surrounded by a huddle of small buildings. It was reminiscent of both a medieval farmyard and of a Carib family compound. The key to the *Map* refers to a windmill on the plantation thus one can infer that Read was a progressive planter; the lack of order of his premises may indicate only that the property had been in existence for many years.

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<sup>117</sup> "Laws of Montserrat," in *Colonial State Papers* (London: National Archives, 1668-1740 inclusive). 19.

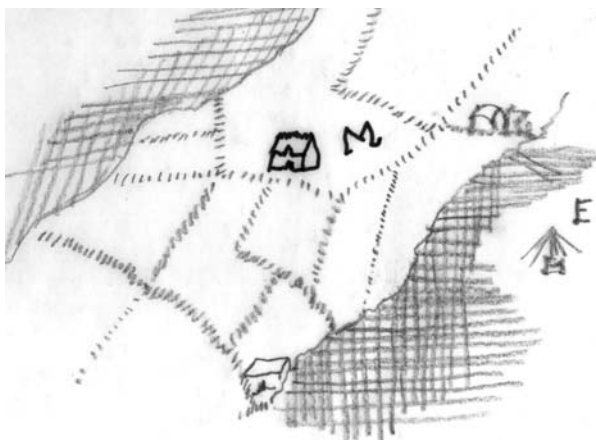


Figure 4.17(a). Pieter Coves' house [M].

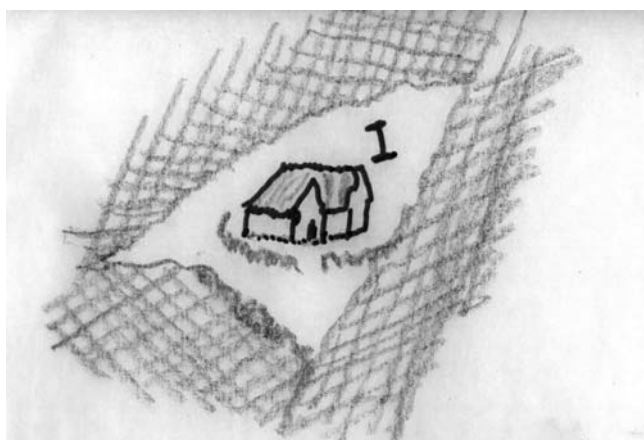


Figure 4.17 (b). Major Caines' house [I].

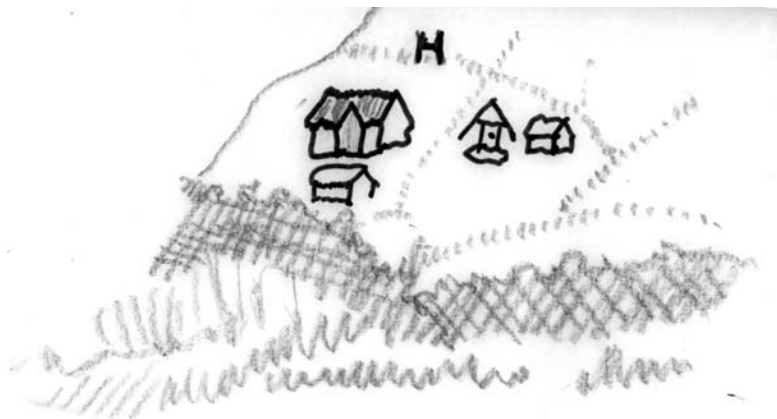


Figure 4.17 ( c). John Ely's house [H].

Figure 4.17. Houses of John Elys, Major Caines and Pieter Coves. After the *Map of Mountserrat . 1673.*

The most prominent residence on the *Map* was at the Waterworks estate, “ye captain-general’s hoüs & plantation” [A] of the governor Stapleton.<sup>118</sup> [See figure 4. 16]. The main house had all the features that indicated that the owner aspired to be accepted as a successful Englishman; he was of course Irish. The large gable-ended house was 1½ stories high with a central projecting porch with an arched roof and column supports. This feature is the first evidence suggesting a sophisticated degree of carpentry work in the Leewards. The placement of windows on the sides of the porch, and of the garret dormers directly above these windows, emphasized the symmetry of the elevation. There are two windows in the gable wall, one above the other, which indicates that the house was only one room deep, and that the garret was a sleeping loft for children or servants. The steeply pitched roof has close to a 60° angle, but the hatching of the surface suggests a finish other than thatch, possibly wood shingles or tiles. In addition, there was a root cellar or cool room at the base of the gable wall.

Stapleton’s report on the buildings in Montserrat suggests that his residence was originally in stonework, and that the Irish practice of building in stone had persisted for years after the first settlement:

There was in Montserrat some stone buildings, but the earthquakes having thrown then all down they build with timber – altogether only the boyling houses for sugar which in part must be built of stone....only two churches ever built, and those demolished by the French, rebuilt by the Governor’s direction on his arrival, but leveled with the ground by a terrible earthquake on Christmas Day 1672 and had the people been in the afternoon at church

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<sup>118</sup> It was the property, otherwise known as the Waterworks, that Willoughby had granted to Stapleton to support the post of lieutenant governor in 1667. Stapleton took personal ownership of the property, which was a portion of 325 acres of Anthony Brisket’s original patent of 1000 acres, and had seized the balance by 1678.



they had been knocked in the head. In some houses, persons were killed as in my own.<sup>119</sup>

The other buildings on the Waterworks site did not exhibit any stylistic pretensions according to the *Map*. A low end-gabled structure immediately uphill of the main house without windows was probably a detached kitchen, but it is possible that it was the earlier Brisket residence. Two clusters of small, windowless gabled buildings sat downhill of the main house; the location suggests that they pertained to the sugar works or were servant and Negro housing, which were generally downhill or downwind of the residence, “because of the smell” said numerous authors.

The location of the waterworks on the plantations cannot be ascertained; probably one of the groups of small buildings housed the waterwheel. The rivers of the islands are small and Stapleton’s comment about the existence of “tower waterworks upon the island for making sugar”<sup>120</sup> seems to suggest that the water turned the wheels by falling onto them. Future research may clarify the mechanical operations of the water mills in the Leewards.

The innovative attitude of the planters is evident in the range and appearance of planter houses on the crest of the between Plymouth and Kingsale. [Figure 4.18] Col. Hasckind’s house [O] on a plantation with windmill had an ordered appearance with a central doorway, windows and dormers above, and what may be a kitchen structure nearby. The roof, however, was hipped and it is quite possible that the house had *carbet* two round ends. At the Kinsale end of the crest stood two plantations owned by Col.

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<sup>119</sup> CO 153/2 folio 172 & 371. 1676.

<sup>120</sup> Stapleton, "Letter from Col. Stapleton with the Answers to Enquiries.CO 153/2.." 173.

Standley [Q], a former governor and ‘old planter’ . One of the residences was a symmetrical 1 ½ story gabled house without a porch; the small structure close by may have been a kitchen. The house on the neighboring plantation appears to be an accretion of two gabled structures with a detached kitchen; this was in the English tradition.

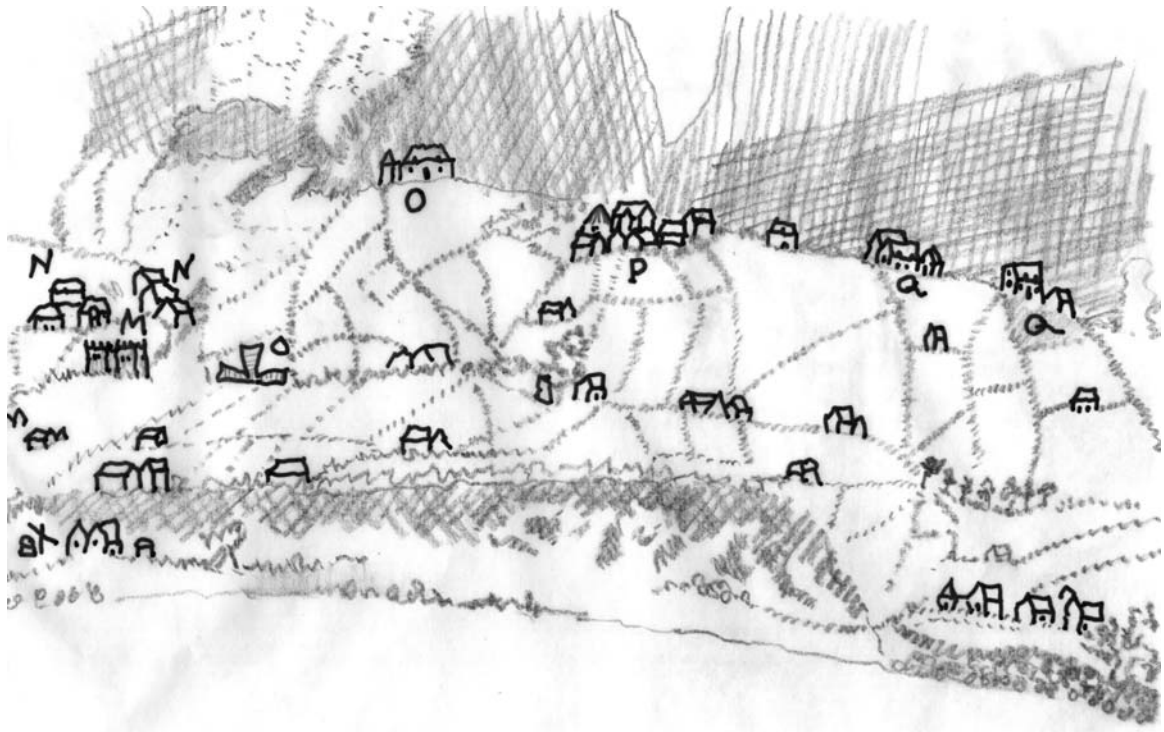


Figure 4.18. Planter houses on the crest of the hill overlooking Plymouth, Montserrat in 1673.  
After the *Map of Mountserratt. 1673..*

The majority of houses on the island were in two densely populated areas. These modest houses had few stylistic pretensions, and with decreasing size came a decreasing appearance of symmetry. The more prosperous of the two areas was Kingsale, in St. George’s parish which, according to Pulsipher, had about 40% English among the Irish population. [See Figure 4. 15 ]. Here many of the farms had two or three lots, and the houses were narrow and tall which suggests that they had one or two rooms at ground level. The height suggests the English small-holders’ tendency to add lofts to increase

the living space; this implies that the houses were not significantly influenced by Carib techniques.

At the lowest end of the economic spectrum were the inhabitants of the dry and inhospitable area of St. Patrick's parish. According to General Stapleton's census of 1677-78, St. Patrick's, which accounted for 10% of the area of Montserrat, was inhabited by 40% of the population; these persons were predominantly Irish.<sup>121</sup> Their houses were low and lacking pretensions to symmetry, and, the smaller the house the fewer the windows, until in St. Patrick's Parish some houses had no windows. [See figures 4.12 and 4.15]. When the houses were very small the entry door, if shown, was not always symmetrically located; most were in the long wall, but there were a few in the gable. These houses were no more than twice as long as wide; they were small and low, with relatively large roofs suggesting thatch. Scholars have read the curve of many of the roofs and the low base walls to infer cruck construction, a traditional Irish practice. Cruck structures were generally large structures. The form could be the round huts of Ireland or a similar appearing Carib-like structure. The smaller Carib structures had rectangular wood frames with forked posts and long roofing thatch, which accounts for the hipped roof appearance of many of the small houses in St. Patrick's. The Irish and Carib structures would appear similar when examined only on a small-scale drawing.

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<sup>121</sup> Lydia Mihelic Pulsipher, "Assessing the Usefulness of a Cartographic Curiosity: The 1673 Map of a Sugar Island.," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 77, no. 3 (1987), Pulsipher, "The Cultural landscape of Montserrat". Akenson.

A structure resembling a gable roof set on the ground is evident on a number of sites in the densely populated Irish areas.<sup>122</sup> These “A-frame Carib-like” structures occur individually or near to small end-gabled structures. This leads one to speculate that the structures were temporary housing, storage space or Negro accommodation; strangely, the small Irish farmers typically owned one or two slaves.

#### 4.5 NEVIS. (1687).

Nevis enjoyed great prosperity possibly because of its freedom from enemy invasion after the Spanish attack of 1629. It was the refuge for other Leeward Islanders when the French threatened to invade and was densely populated. The island was a depot of the Royal African Adventurers from the late 1660s until the Company lost its monopoly in 1698<sup>123</sup> and several company members and agents owned properties on the island. The Society of Bristol Merchants, also involved in the Africa trade, had a particular interest in the island as is evident from the names of Somerset and Gloucestershire families that recur in the records like Westbury and Brome.

As early as 1672, General Stapleton had reported to the Lords of Trade and Plantations that, in spite of the inhabitants’ determination to conceal their worth for fear of taxation, the wealth of Nevis was clearly twice that of the three other islands combined.<sup>124</sup> It is, therefore, not surprising that the term ‘mansion’ appears in

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<sup>122</sup> These were indicated as being cruck structures by Pulsipher on the basis that the owners were predominantly of Irish origin where it is a traditional form of building.

<sup>123</sup> Machling.

<sup>124</sup> CO 153/2 f.180. In 1676 Col. Wm. Stapleton valued the wealth of the islands thus: St. Christopher's (English) 67,000l; Antigua 67000l; Nevis 384,660l and Montserrat 62,500l.

correspondence about the houses of wealthy Nevisian merchants and planters in the late seventeenth century. Indeed in 1681 one M. Wilkins described a typical sugar plantation on the island as having a stone mansion house:

The state of a sugar plantation in Nevis....11 coppers, 3 stills and appurtenances, one very good stone mansion house with kitchen and other necessaries on ye housens site also down at towne two good storehouses consist of 5 serviceable tenements so that ye whole estate is worth £8000.<sup>125</sup>

It is evident from the soundings near the roads and other inscriptions that the *Hack Chart of the West End of Nevis (1686)* was for navigational purposes. [Figure 4.19]. In terms of landmarks on the island, the chart shows the coastal fortifications, two windmills and only fourteen houses; this last item is significant because of the dense population of the island and points to the importance of those properties.

The largest house stood in St. John's Parish and towered over the island, which suggests that this was the "seat" of the recently deceased Sir William Stapleton, mentioned in the inscription on the Chart.<sup>126</sup> The house appears to be a developed form of tower house, an L-shaped 'tower house', with pediment gable ends and a colonnade facing the port town.<sup>127</sup> Probably the well-educated Stapleton had attempted to integrate the traditional authoritarian symbol with those of intellect and culture.

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<sup>125</sup> M Wilkins, "Extract of Letter to Mr. Platt from M. Wilkins in Nevis," in *Egerton MSS* (London: British Library, 1681).

<sup>126</sup> William Hack, "A Chart of part of St. Christopher's and the west end of Nevis; drawn in 1687, by William Hack, on a scale of 2 inches to a mile.," in *Map Collections*; (London, UK.: British Library, 1687).

<sup>127</sup> "Examples of the L-plan tower houses are those at Loch Leven and Threave".[Clive Hardy, *Scottish Castles* (Salisbury, Wiltshire: Frith Book Company Limited, 2003; reprint, Paperback). 17-18].



Figure 4.19. Detail of the *Hack Chart of St. Christopher and the West End of Nevis*. 1687. [British Library]. The largest towering house on the right or south of the image is generally believed to belong to the Governor Stapleton. The nearby house probably belonged to the Smith family.

On a large plantation in close proximity to the Stapleton's, on Saddle Hill, is a substantial house with two round ends of Carib provenance and a hipped roof. The windows and doors were randomly placed. One recognizes that the two houses stood on large plantations because they both had a windmill. It is quite probable the Smith family occupied the smaller property that in an inventory of 1685 included an "old windmill and another house...one pigeon post, but not the land"<sup>128</sup>; the semi-feudal system of land rent was still common. References to this property on Saddle Hill recur in the Pinney papers and it appears that the property belonged to Mrs. Mary Smith, a daughter of Mary Travers Helmes<sup>129</sup>, and eventually to Mary Helmes Pinney. The house on the site in 1722 is the topic of later section of this study.

<sup>128</sup> W Symonds and L. Stanley, "Order of Sir William Stapleton to Capt. Walter Symonds & Capt. John Stanley to Make an Inventory of the Estate of John Smith, Deceased. Inventory Amounting to 103,664 Lb. Signed by Symonds, L. Stanley Dated March 18th, 1685.," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Special Collections, Bristol University, 1685).

<sup>129</sup> Pinney & Merriweather, "Re-Estate/Plantation of Mary Travers Rented by Mr. John Smith for 16 Years at 28000Lb Sugar Per Annum. circa 1700.," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Special Collections, Bristol University Library, 1700). In an Inventory of 1704 it is precisely stated that "att Saddlehill....from Mrs.

The locations of substantial houses shown on the lower slopes of the island are consistent with the large plantation houses of the Pinney connections: Lady Baudon's above Old Road Fort, Westbury, Charlot's and Proctor's. They were one or 1½ stories high with the entrance door in a gable-end. It is clear from the asymmetrical placement of openings that in 1686 academic design ideals of symmetry were not a general concern or that these were relatively old houses. Several of these houses appear to have a hipped roof or Carib-influenced round end, which supports that the latter reading. The large houses have yellow colored walls with red corners as if to emphasize corner boards in timber structures or quoins in masonry ones; it is probable that the houses were painted or lime-plastered.<sup>130</sup>

The form of the house on the hill at Westbury is clearly defined; it had a single round end facing north in the Carib tradition; a gable end faced south. This may be the house with the garden mentioned in an agreement that Richard Westbury signed in 1696. He agreed to be confined to premises, but gained permission, "to have the liberty of the garden for his wife, but none of the plantation Negroes to be hindered in ordering it".<sup>131</sup>

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Mary Smith to her mother Mrs. Mary Travers for...more also plantation bought by Mrs. Travers in her widowhood". [Wm. Marden, Mr. Samuel Browne, and Mr. Solomon Israel, "Inventory on behalf of Wm. and Mary Helmes carried out by Wm. Marden, Mr. Samuel Browne, Mr. Solomon Israel," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Bristol University Library, 1704).]. Mary Smith was the grand-daughter of the extremely wealthy Penelope Mead of St. Christopher. [Penelope Mead, "Will of Penelope Mead," in *Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury* (London: 1737)]

<sup>130</sup> Physical examination by the author of the "old fort" at Newcastle, the early structures at Russell's Rest and a small plantation of a former Irish indentured servant on Nevis indicated the extensive use of lime plaster to waterproof the structures.

<sup>131</sup> Richard Westbury, "Agreement Signed by Richard Westbury Dated 4th June ...Dreaded 'Liberty'." in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Special Collections, Bristol University Library, 1696).

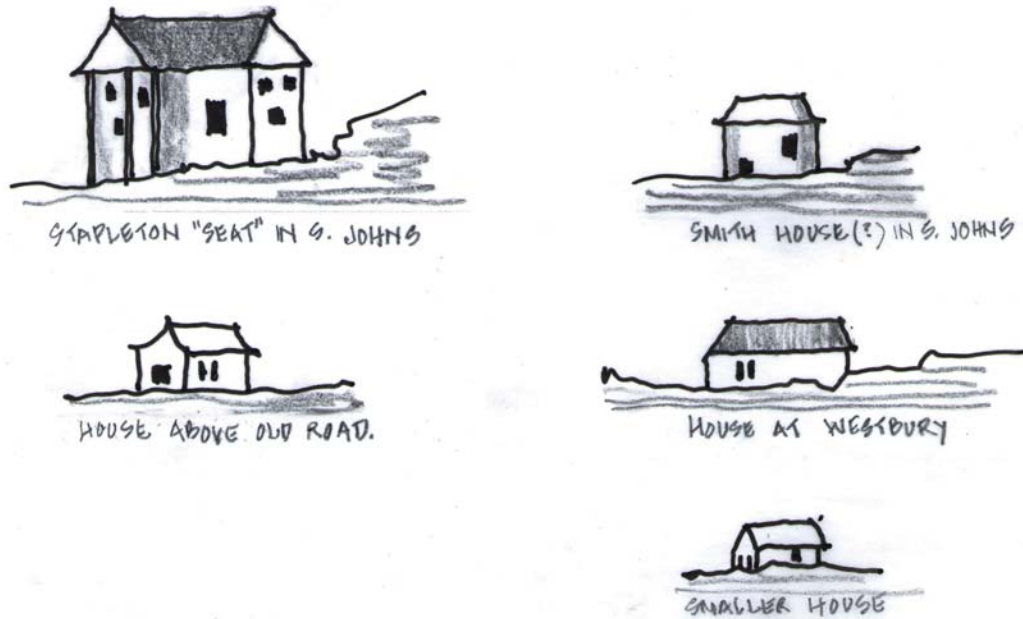


Figure 4.20 Sketches of five houses on Nevis on the *Hack Chart of St. Christopher and the West End of Nevis. 1687.* [Hobson.]

The records of the Pinney Collection confirm that circa 1700 the majority of the houses mentioned were of wooden construction with stone for the basements. It is probable that if any of the large houses illustrated on the chart had been built of stone it shared the fate of de Poincy's chateau and Betty's Hope in 1690, and collapsed in the earthquake that, John Oldmixon recounted, struck Nevis in June 1690/1:

About 5 o'clock...began a mighty Earthquake, with so much Violence, that almost all the Houses in Charlestown, which were of Brick or Stone, were in an Instant levell'd with the Ground, and those built of Timber shook....'tis usual almost at every House in this island to have a large Cistern to contain the Rain Water, of about 9 or 10 Foot deep, and 15 or 20 Foot Diameter; several of which, with the Violence of the Earthquake, threw out the Water 8 or 10 Foot high.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Oldmixon, 1741 #57 Vol.II p 253 .



## 4.6 SUMMARY

In the Proprietary period, the pioneers understood that the islands were a frontier with Spain. This had the result that, as a defensive measure, some of them erected strong houses or tower houses on the large tracts of fertile land that they seized, these houses were built of timber and of stone. Many of their servants, who lived in close proximity to the tower houses, had simple structures or “hutts”<sup>133</sup> similar to temporary European or Caribs ones.

The islands prospered particularly after the introduction of sugar cultivation and after the 1650s there were substantial houses of stone, brick and wood. Travelers wrote of the English houses and churches which were boarded, but had spaces between the boards for ventilation. This was very similar to the Carib palisade techniques.

By the 1670s, a desirable residence for a sugar planter, in terms of the internal arrangements, was a ‘house of three rooms’ of which one was a hall and the others were ‘chambers’; the kitchen and steward room were detached from the main house. At this time, the Irish and not the Negroes comprised half the population of the Leewards. The other structures on the property were sugar processing buildings and accommodation for servants and Negroes. The English brought their penchant for prominent sites and walled gardens to the Leewards and by the 1680s they were in evidence; they marked boundaries around houses and between fields.

It is evident that a number of substantial planters lived in houses similar to the *carbets* of the Caribs. These structures, some of which were large, had either one or two

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<sup>133</sup> Jeaffreson, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*. 17.

rounded end walls, one of which pointed to the prevailing wind direction.. In some cases the owners Anglicized the indigenous-looking structures with a porch entrance. One can assume that these houses withstood hurricanes and earthquakes more efficiently than European ones.

The houses of prominent personalities displayed a trend towards symmetry and, in Montserrat, the more fashionable houses had a greater number of windows and dormers than others. It appears that the most up-to-date houses had gable end walls rather than the round ends. The houses had a single pile form, were no more than 1 1/2 stories high to withstand hurricanes and increasingly were built of timber to decrease collapse during earthquakes.

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## CHAPTER 5. THE HOUSES OF ST. CHRISTOPHER IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

This chapter deals with the residences of the English quarter of St. Christopher in 1706 and those of 1726 that were built in the abandoned French quarters. It focuses on types, spatial arrangements and the trends evident in the architecture. The primary sources of information are the inventories and descriptions in the 1707/8 *Report of the Commission to Inquire into Losses Sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Christopher During the French Raid of 1705/6. Claims Allowed*<sup>1</sup>, and the *Journal of the Proceedings For Disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the Island of St. Christopher. 1726*<sup>2</sup>.

### 5.1 THE HOUSES OF ST. CHRISTOPHER IN 1706

In the 1705/6 *Commission Report*, with the exception of a handful of merchants, vintners and widows the population presented themselves as “planters”, but a substantial number of the claimants were small farmers and artisans. The population conducted their trading in the port towns, which grew in response to the increase in the sugar economy. There is

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<sup>1</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8).

<sup>2</sup> Hon. William Matthew, Gilbert Fleming, and Edward Esq. Mann, "Copy of Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty's Leeward Caribbean Islands in America & Gilbert Fleming and Edward Mann, Esq. for disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the island of St. Christopher's formerly belonging to the French.," in *Archive of St. Kitts* (Basseterre.: 1726).

no evidence in records or on the ground of a new interest in planning or setting down a street pattern in the English towns of St. Christopher. Their layouts up to the 1970's were very similar to those of the Buor Map of circa 1700.

Across all social scales, house-holders lived in premises, called 'messuages' in legal documents.<sup>3</sup> The messuage was comprised of the main house and several small, ancillary buildings or 'outhouses'. The benefit of having a number of small, generally single-function cells, is not clear; however, scholars of colonial architecture suggest that the reason is the technological constraints of the period and the greater ease of constructing two small structures rather than a single large one.<sup>4</sup>

The majority of the European inhabitants lived in houses that they spoke of as having 'two rooms' or 'three rooms' and that some of the very wealthy or 'old inhabitant' families referred to 'a large dwelling house'. [Figure 5.1] Two or three rooms were not necessarily the number of spatial cells in the house, because, according to the householder's means, there could have been four or more rooms in total. Within each house type, there were ranges of finish and furnishing, a blurring of distinction at the limits, or an overlapping of types. It is apparent that the designations referred to mental modes of living or to a functional organization of the house.

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<sup>3</sup> Land deeds of the time used the term 'messuage', a Middle English term referring to 'premises'. According to Lounsbury, it is "a legal term used to describe a dwelling house, its outbuildings, cartilage, and the immediate lands associated with it".

<sup>4</sup> Carl R. Lounsbury, ed., *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*, Prepared at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).



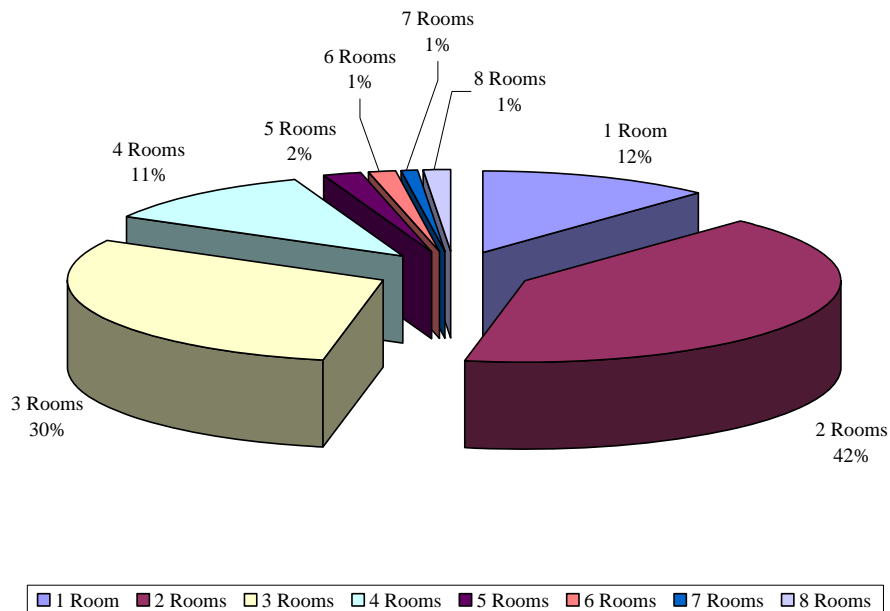


Figure 5.1. The Distribution of Residences by the number of rooms stated in the 1707/8 Commission Report following the French raid on St. Christopher in 1706.

#### 5.1.1 ‘Outhouses’ And Ancillary Buildings.

The generic name for a non-habitable single function structure was “outhouse”, which signifies a freestanding structure. Several had specific designations and different purposes; some were practical, while others were symbolic. The outhouses of the messuage were of different kinds. An attorney, Philip LaCousay, described his premises by the most substantial structures “dwelling house, cook room and lodging room”.<sup>5</sup> Other persons spoke of the ‘necessary house’, pigeon house, stables, hurricane house and washing room. A habitable single-cell structure ancillary to the main residence was called ‘a room’, an ‘outchamber’ or a ‘lodging’.

<sup>5</sup> Gillard et al. 520.

About twelve percent of the all the domestic structures reported were outhouses or had only one cell or internal space. Yet, within this group of simple structures, there is evidence of both Carib and British techniques and of the adaptive processes of the British population.

The detached kitchens were generally the largest of the outhouses; in the more affluent premises, they adjoined a 'steward room'. There are few definite patterns about the prevalence of use or other associations except that the owners were among the wealthiest. [Figure 5.2]. The lack of definite patterns in the report may be because many persons, including affluent planter families, did not mention the loss or damage of a kitchen. This is different from saying that they did not own a detached kitchen. In addition, several prominent families, for instance the Battrys, Gillards and Codrington, had more than one kitchen. Detached kitchens were located in both the town and plantation setting. The 'cook room and steward room' was a large structure; the size of this structure was by tradition, symbolic of the owner's wealth and ability to entertain on a grand scale,<sup>6</sup> and in some cases the kitchen and steward room was larger than the main house. [Figures 5.3 and 5.4] The contents indicate that the actual preparation of meals, often with meats cooked on spits, took place in the hearth and oven of the cook room. The steward room served for storage of everyday pewter, tableware and dried foodstuff. Poor persons, in contrast, mentioned their bake stones; they may have cooked under a makeshift roof.

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<sup>6</sup> This was a medieval tradition, according to Girouard: "Something of the splendour of the hall often passed over into the kitchen, buttery, pantry and cellars which served it" Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House. A social and architectural history*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978).34.

Under new fire regulations, many householders had rebuilt the kitchens with at least one gable wall or hearth wall in stone, with a hole for the flue. [Figure 5.5]. A wealthy householder like the merchant Jededdiah Hutchinson owned “A Stonewall house covered w<sup>th</sup> s of 20 foot long, 18 foot wide divided in a Steward Room & kitchen w<sup>th</sup> brick chimney and two Funnels”.<sup>7</sup> There was a range of kitchens, and some persons did not mention an oven. On the other hand, two vintners, James Ramsey and Peter Thomas, had installed “built-in dressers”.<sup>8</sup> In spite of these up-to-date features, most cook rooms had thatched roofs; in a small number, pantiles covered the roof near the hearth wall, and others had shingles. Some more sophisticated persons, like Joseph Crisp, did not use the common term of ‘cook room’. Instead, he referred to the huge stone structure as his “kitchen”; it had walls ten foot high and “a room overhead boarded”, possibly to accommodate the cook.<sup>9</sup>

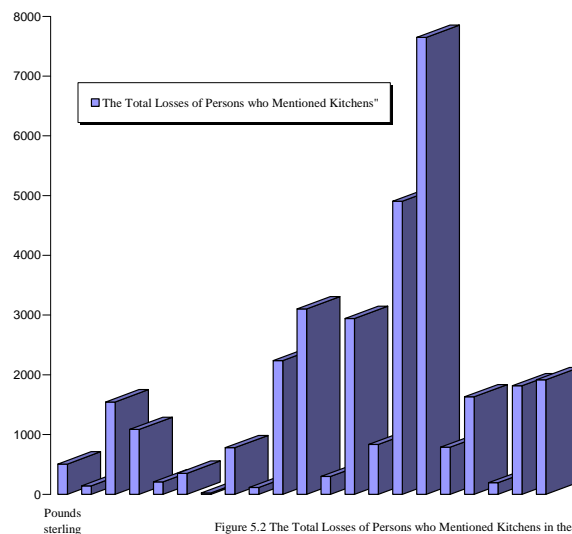


Figure 5.2 The Total Losses of Persons who Mentioned Kitchens in the 1705/6 Commission Report

Figure 5.2 The Total Losses Of Persons Who Mentioned Kitchens in the 1705/6 Commission Report. [Hobson].

<sup>7</sup> Gillard et al. 59.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 132.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 38.

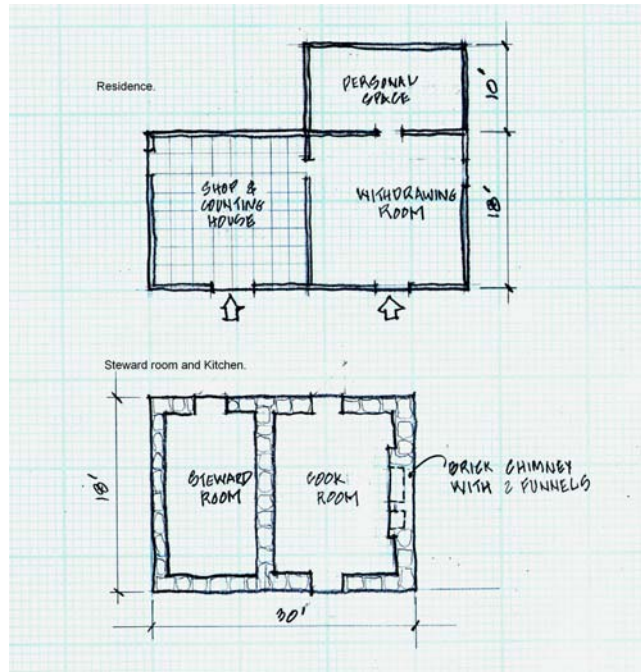


Figure 5.3. Conjectural plans of Jedediah Hutchinson's residence and his steward room and kitchen in Old Road Town. [Hobson].

Descriptions of detached structure for cooking in St. Christopher in 1706 [CO 243/2]

Name of Claimant	Location	Description of kitchen	Length, Ft.	Breadth, Ft
Gillard, Cpn Edward	plantation	cookroom	24	15
	town	cookroom & steward room		
Garnet, John	plantation	a steward room, thatched	16	12
Crisp, Joseph Snr	plantation	large stone kitchen with room above	40	20
Burrell, Cpn. Henry	plantation	cookroom & steward room...with an oven, part pantiled & part thatched.	42	23
Ramsey, Mr. James -vintner	town	cookroom...with dressers therein	20	13
Wattis, George	farm	cookroom [also cassava grater & bakestones]		
Codrington, Christopher Esq.	plantation	steward room & cookroom		
Clayton, William & Madam Jane	town	kitchen & steward room		
Clayton, Madam Jane	plantation	kitchen & steward room		
Battry, Mrs. Jone	plantation	one cookroom and steward room newly built, a stone wall, oven and chimney		
	town	cookroom built with stone and lime and an oven		
Hutchinson, Jedediah	town	steward room & kitchen	30	18
Assailly, Mrs. Martha, widow	town	cookroom & stable		
Pogson, John	plantation	one kitchen, hearth	18	18

Figure 5.4. Descriptions of the detached structures for cooking in St. Christopher in 1706.



Figure 5.5 The hearth wall of a 17<sup>th</sup> century kitchen in the Leeward Islands with a smoke hole instead of a chimney. (2004). [Hobson].

The ‘lodgings’, ‘out chambers’ and ‘separate chambers’, that is, the freestanding guest houses for travelers, were a response to the imperative for privacy of the English Europeans.<sup>10</sup> [Figure 5.6] The lodgings of the plantocracy were markedly neater in appearance and finish than the main house, suggesting that the lodgings were recently constructed and finished to a high standard to accommodate guests of quality.<sup>11</sup> An example was the lodging of the wealthy John Bourryau, who built his “lodging room” of “choice timber plained”, and both the roof and sides had a shingle finish. These finishes alone distinguished the lodging room from his family’s large, thatched house with its brick floors. He estimated the value of the residence at £200, and that of the much smaller lodging at all of £70. This lodging room had an unusual and innovative feature.

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<sup>10</sup> Girouard.. 108.

<sup>11</sup> Gillard et al. 17

The sixteen-foot square lodging had not only a wooden floor, but also a “shade” or veranda running the entire length of the chamber.

Similar to the cook room, the lodging was a part of the residence, or ‘message’, and was a feature across a wide spectrum of the population. Even a poor person like Andrew Patrick, who could sign his name only with his initials, had “a separate chamber annexed to--- house about 12 inside as 12 ft Square built with mountain timber, thatched and cained round ye sides and ends...£5”.<sup>12</sup>

**Sample of Descriptions of detached guest houses/rooms in St. Christopher in 1706. [CO 243/3]**

Name of Claimant	Location	Description of kitchen	Length, Ft.	Breadth, Ft
Bourryau, John	plantation	a lodging room...and a shade of 16ft long & 8 ft wide	16	16
Thomas, John	town	outroom of 18 foot long	18	
King, Mary - widow	town	one new room	18	16
Patrick, Andrew	plantation	a chamber annexed to said house	12	12
Barker, Daniel	plantation	two other small rooms	-	-
Cole, Susanna	plantation	1 chamber	16	16
Phipps, Francis	plantation	one outchamber	16	16
LaCousay, Philip	plantation	with other small lodging of ye same	-	-

Figure 5.6. A sample of descriptions of detached guest houses/rooms in St. Christopher in 1706.

Another custom transmitted to the Leewards was the longstanding West European symbol of the property-owning aristocracy, the ‘pigeon house’.<sup>13</sup> Several inhabitants

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 514.

<sup>13</sup> Pigeonnier : Lit: pigeon house. Derived from Roman custom, the dovecote became a symbol of aristocracy in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century France. Peasants were forbidden to hunt on estate lands without permission, and pigeonniers stood as visible expressions of ownership of the land and therefore the game

reported on the loss of their pigeon houses, which were of different sorts and sizes. The largest reported belonged to the ostentatious Joseph Crisp Snr. President of the Island Council. His pigeon house was a two-story structure “16 foot high, 14 foot square with a room underneath paved with bricks boarded and shingled capable of containing 200 prs of pidgeons”.<sup>14</sup> The room underneath was used for storage of plantation supplies, which included nails, linseed oil and “colours for painting” as well as other tools for his “artificiers”, who were probably engaged on the construction of his new dwelling house. The linseed oil combined with the pulverized pigments or ‘colours for painting’ was a paint used in the colonial period;<sup>15</sup> thus, it is probable that the buildings of the message, including the pigeon house, were painted with contrasting colors on the walls and shutters. Alternately, the painting may have been for the interior only. [Figure 5.6].

John Papin and John Bourryau had more modest pigeon houses, which were raised on four posts.<sup>16</sup> Bourryau’s, valued at ten pounds, was built of “Hard timber”; it was ten foot square boarded and shingled.<sup>17</sup> The pigeon house was an important part of the Papin message, which, he said, had “1 House 2 Story high 4 other Rooms cover’d w<sup>th</sup> boards and shingles wholly burnt and part of the walls don [*dans*] ye boyling house burnt & pigeon house all burnt...£200”<sup>18</sup>. A pigeon house was a symbol of being a property-holder; Papin was Huguenot and not of English stock; thus, he was insistent

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upon it, even birds. These structures became architecturally elaborate in France. Something of their symbolism of rank was carried into the American plantation world. [Jay D. Edwards, "The Interpretation of African and Afro-American contributions to the Architecture of the Southern United States," (Savannah, Georgia.: Savannah College of Art, Dept of Architectural History., 2004).] 156.

<sup>14</sup> Gillard et al. 37.

<sup>15</sup> Lounsbury, ed. 271.

<sup>16</sup> In the Southern North American colonies pigeon houses were generally freestanding buildings, often round in plan or raised above ground level on post. [Ibid. 271]

<sup>17</sup> Gillard et al. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 94

about affirming his status even though as a Huguenot he had declared his loyalty to the “Crown of England” twenty-seven years before.<sup>19</sup>



Figure 5.7a. A two-story pigeon house of a type found in Louisiana that is similar to Joseph Crisp's. After Edwards.

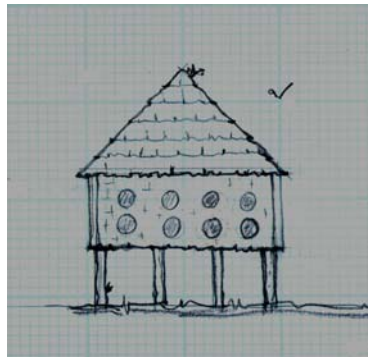


Figure 5.7b. An English North American pigeon house that is similar to John Papin's. After Lounsbury.

Figure 5.7 Two types of pigeon houses known in the North American colonial areas.  
After Edwards and Lounsbury.

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<sup>19</sup> The presence of significant numbers of Huguenots was the result of official policies starting in the 1650's to encourage "Protestants of what nation so ever" to live under English government in the Leewards. [W. Noel Sainsbury, Esq., ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574-1660*, vol. 1-5 (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860). May 2, 1656.



The differences in the structures of the hurricane houses may have depended on the contents that were to be protected during the storm and/or to personal preferences. One type represented a rigid European means of protection, whereas the alternative was a flexible Carib structure. The recognition of the differences between the types demonstrates the inhabitants' keen understanding of and adaptation to the Leewards environment. The wealthy planters William and Ralph Willett built "a hurricane house 17 foot long and 16 broad, walled round to the plates roofed with mountain squared timber boards, shingled, floor'd with bricks...£30."<sup>20</sup> Considering that their main dwelling house on the plantation was thatched and primarily of wood, the nearly square stone walled structure certainly would have provide a much drier and psychologically secure shelter for them and their families during a storm.

The flexible structures of hurricane houses, similar to those of the Widow King and Thomas Jossop, were of an entirely different nature because the intention was to secure animals, and perhaps Negroes, in a storm. These hurricane houses had good *lignum vitae* posts planted in the ground, but were "wild caned round" and "thatched" on the roof.<sup>21</sup> It is probable that the 'wild cane' spoken of by the colonists was similar to bamboo. John Abbott also used these available and cheap construction materials for his hurricane house, which he had also thatched and 'cained' round. These fragile appearing structures could withstand storm winds and corral animals because they allowed the passage of air, which is reminiscent of the palisade structures of the Caribs. John Abbott showed the same understanding in the staged construction of his 'dwelling house', which had stone walls on one side and end, with the other two sides 'wattled'; this provided

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<sup>20</sup> Gillard et al. 42.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 277.

adequate privacy and ventilation until he could find resources to complete the structure with windows, if required.<sup>22</sup> The practice of wattling without daubing allowed for ventilation and obviated the need for costly windows. Indeed Abbot may have been ‘hedging his bets’ by employing the two cultural practices. [Figure 5.8]



Figure 5.8. A recent example of a wattle structure in the Caribbean. [Slesin].

#### 5.1.2. Habitable ‘one room’ structures.

In 1726, there were very few habitable single room houses, and these were essentially the first stage of a residence. The inhabitants had aspirations to wealth and elegant living so that it is not surprising that very few, among them William Woodley and Sarah Pyke, admitted to owning “a house w<sup>th</sup> a large room”.<sup>23</sup> There were more instances of a single room over or adjoining a stable, boyling house or kitchen for a

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 678.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 171, 389.

servant or groom to live in. The exceedingly wealthy Joseph Crisp Snr had such accommodation for servants.

Clement Crooke was another person with a single habitable room for one of his houses. The building indicates that, like John Abbot's, many colonists and planters constructed their houses in stages as funds became available, in the accretive manner of vernacular architecture. Crooke had two houses under construction, which implies that one was on his plantation in Cayon and the other in a town. Crooke's country house, the smaller of the two, was the more pretentious, for even though it had only one room, 17 by 21 feet, and was incomplete, it had a porch, which indicated his aspirations to be recognized as a cultured property-owner.<sup>24</sup> The enclosed porch provided a buffer zone and privacy to the interior. [Figure 5.9] His town house had two rooms, so there was adequate privacy. The incomplete status of his residences indicates his struggle to get his affairs up and running, so that to have completed the porch connotes the symbolic importance of that feature. His flowing signature and furniture, which included a couch and twelve chairs covered with Russian leather, plus a round table of English Oak, confirms that he was an educated man with some financial resources. [Figure 5.10].

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 87.



Figure 5.9. An eighteenth century version of the enclosed porch on a small plantation house. Belmont, St. Kitts. [Hobson].



St. Christophers 86

Clement Crooke - of the Parish of  
St. Mary Cayon in a Island of St. Christophers in America  
Planter Maketh Oath on y<sup>e</sup> Holy Evangelists That y<sup>e</sup> sev-  
eral Losses mentioned in y<sup>e</sup> Annexed Account were actually  
and truly by him sustained when y<sup>e</sup> French Invaied this Island  
in Feby and March 1763 And further this Dep<sup>t</sup> faith that  
he hath not at any time since received Restitution for y<sup>e</sup> Whole  
or part thereof And that he hath in no wise advanced  
upon y<sup>e</sup> said Losses but that y<sup>e</sup> same is in all respects  
to y<sup>e</sup> best of his Knowledge a Just and true Account

unto and signed this  
day of January 1763

Before us

J. M. Crooke

J. M. Crooke

J. M. Crooke

Figure 5.10. Clement Crooke's signature on the coversheet of his Claim in the 1707/8 Commission Report on the Losses sustained by the inhabitants of St. Christopher's.

### 5.1.3 'A House Of Two Rooms'.

A large numbers of claimants used the term 'house of two rooms' or mentioned 'two rooms' in the description of the houses. This terminology drew attention to what was essentially a known concept or type of spatial structure of the house, and, as mentioned previously, was not necessarily a count of the spatial cells in the house. In the northern mainland colonies, this type is called the 'hall and parlor' type. In England it was a common house type for rural workers who did not own the house spot and was essentially the arrangement of small shops in the towns. It was versatile and produced a range of house configurations, from simple structures with dirt floors to the town houses of planters. [Figure 5.11] 'Two rooms' was:

- The predominant house type for over 40% of the sample of the claimants who mentioned the number of spaces in their houses.<sup>25</sup> [See Figure 5.1].
- The house type of the poorer inhabitants, the small farmers and artisans and servants or workers on plantations. The median value of this type was £20, which is the same value as the median of all the domestic structures of the population.

The claimants spoke about their "house of two rooms" in a manner similar to Jeddediah Hutchinson:

By one dwelling house in Towne of 36 foot Long 18 foot wide of 2 rooms one boarded under foot the other Brikt of mastick Ironwood & yello. Sander Cratches...a Shed of 18 foot long 10 foot wide boarded and shingled.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> This figure is derived from the terminology of claimants who stated the number of rooms. Many persons did not say the number of rooms.

<sup>26</sup> Gillard et al. 59.

The inhabitants described their houses of two rooms as a rectangle in plan. Examination shows that the rectangle was about twice as long as wide; however the builders may have added a 'lean-to', shed or closet to the basic form.

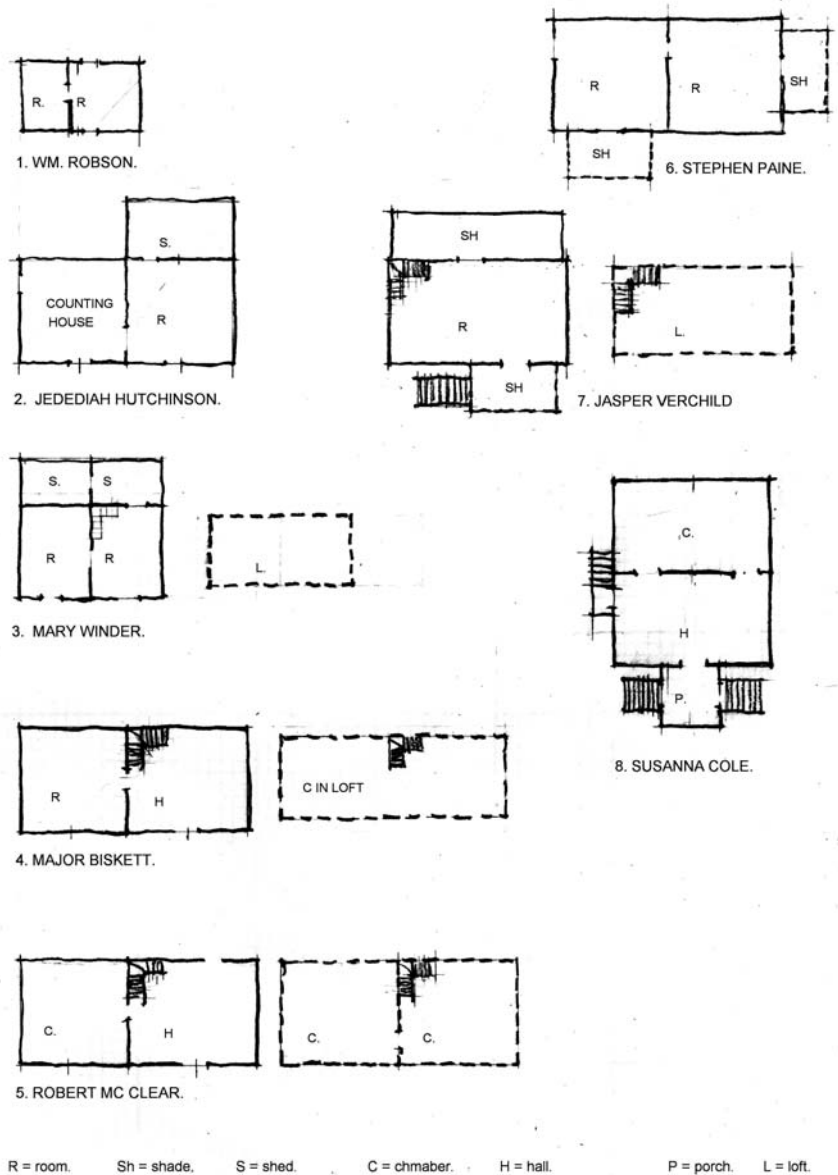


Figure 5.11 Conjectural layouts of various configurations of a two-room house in St. Christopher's. [Hobson].

The more valuable properties that were significantly above the median house value of £20, like Jededdiah Hutchinson's, were most likely to have additional lofts or closets or 'outchambers' on the grounds. In addition, a particular use as a merchant-planter town house is discernible in the most valuable examples of the type. At a certain level in society, the householders seemed to hesitate to say "two rooms"; perhaps this was to distinguish their accommodation from that of artisans and small farmers who lived in a modest two cell structure.

An example of the very simple house of a farmer is the house of Joseph Herbert, who grew tobacco and cassava on a smallholding in Middle Island. At 10 feet wide, the house was narrow, 13 feet being the median width for 'two-room' houses, and modest, being well below the median of £20: [Figure 5.12a]

One thatched house 20 ftt long & 10 ftt wide wild cained round consisting of two rooms....£6:00:00.<sup>27</sup>

Josias Percivale's house had a wider span and was more valuable than Herbert's. That Percivale was prospering is evident from the improvement in quality of the newer section of house over the starter unit. For the second room, he used more durable hardwood posts instead of the randomly found timber of the first:

1 dwelling house cont. 25 foot long 12 foot wide one Room of mastick posts the other mountain timber boarded and thatcht...£9.00.00.<sup>28</sup>

That Percivale was illiterate is evident because he could make only a mark and did not sign his name in the *1707/8 Report*. His losses totaled £22. The furniture in the house was simple and locally-made, but included the symbolically important bedstead as well

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 158.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 148.



as a table of yellow sandor, three benches and one joint stool, a large cedar chest “with several things therein”, and one box containing household goods.

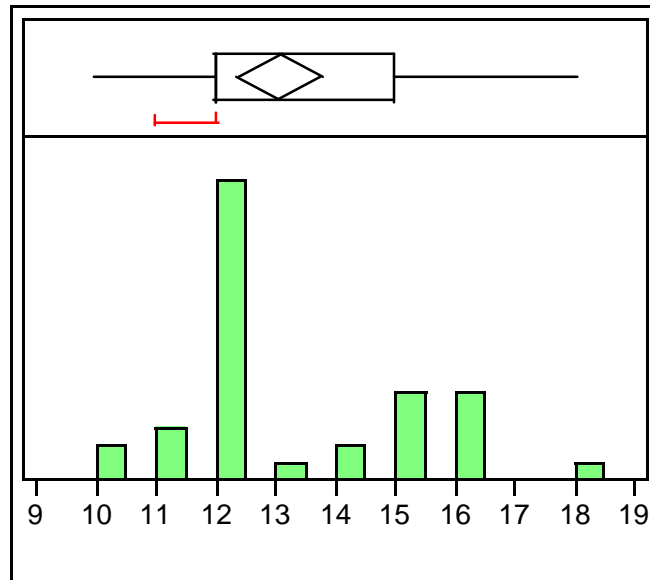


Figure 5.12a Graph showing the roof spans in feet of houses stated to have two rooms. [Hobson].

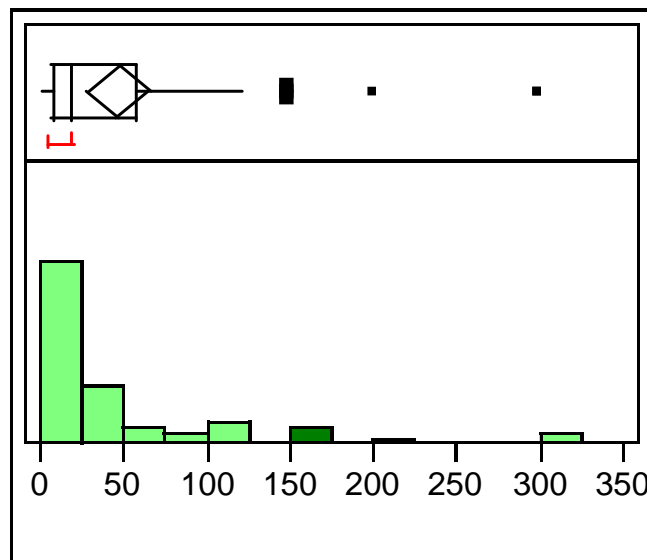


Figure 5.12b Graph showing the range of values in pounds sterling and the relative numbers of houses stated to have two rooms. [Hobson].

Figure 5.12. Graphs showing the ranges of value and roof span of houses stated to have two rooms.

Jone Coffee was another small farmer; his surname suggests that he was a free Negro. He personally lost “two thirds of an acre of Ground in all Sorts of Provisions” as well as a large iron chest, two tables, four benches and an empty pipe. It appears that his accommodation was very similar to those of the other small farmers, for he lived in “one Dwelling house near Old Road Town Con<sup>t</sup> 24 f<sup>t</sup>. long & 14 f<sup>t</sup> wide of this Country Timber & wild Cained and thatched...£14.”<sup>29</sup>

A yam and cotton farmer, William Robson, had a smaller house than both Percivale and Coffee. However, Robson’s losses totaled £40; he was more successful than Percivale, and his house was much better finished. Not only was the floor bricked and the gable boarded, but the house was raised off the ground and ‘underpinned’<sup>30</sup>, or raised on a stone foundation:

Dwelling house with 2 rooms 20 foot long and 12 foot wide with Mastick posts bricked underpinned and the gable boarded...£40.<sup>31</sup> [Figure 5.13]

The significant difference between this house and the former ones was the structure. The hardwood posts suggest earthfast construction, and the single gable suggests there may have been a rounded end.

The occupants of the more valuable houses mentioned windows and ironmongery. Lt. Governor Michael Lambert’s carpenter, Mr. Holwell, a valued servant on a large plantation, lived in a finer house than Robson, one with lockable windows and doors. There is no indication whether the windows were glazed or were simply shutters; both sash windows and shutters were in use. This house of above the median value of ‘two room’ houses was “23 foot long & 12 ft. broad one partition and boarded round with

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 385.

<sup>30</sup> See dictionary and glossary.

<sup>31</sup> Gillard et al. 146.

mastick boards and all the timber of mastick wt<sup>h</sup>. doors, windows, locks & etc... £50”<sup>32</sup>.

Further up the social and economic ladder were houses with more than two cells, like

Mary Winder’s, which actually had five:

1 dwelling house with mastick cratches boarded and shingled 2 Rooms with a small loft with 2 large sheds the whole Cont. about 24 foot square, belonging to Mrs. Mary Winder for whom I am attorney.....£80.00.00.<sup>33</sup> [Figure 5.11(3)]

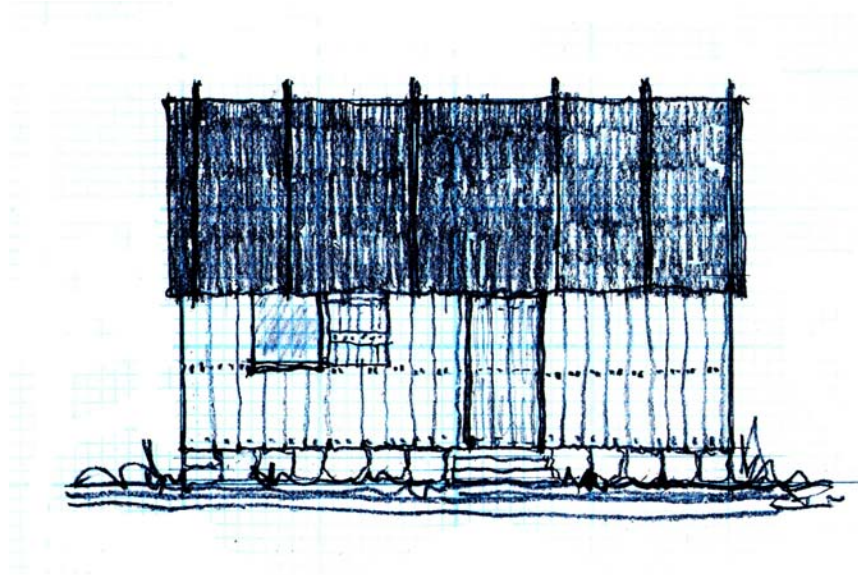


Figure 5.13 . Conjectural elevation of a small farmer’s house similar to Wm. Robson’s, which was “a Dwelling house with 2 Rooms 20 foot long and 12 foot wide with Mastick posts, bricked, underpinned and gable boarded”. [Hobson].

Common in the Leewards was the form of sheds attached to the main house, known in North-west European yeomen houses. The sheds, or lean-tos, were generally about eight feet deep, a substantial space that could hold a family bed. The inconsistency in the descriptions makes it difficult to quantify the level, but it appears that in the upper socio-economic levels, the houses become more ‘polite’ than, for example, Percival’s

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 33

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 60.

accretive 'hovel'<sup>34</sup>, and that, in addition to or as an alternative to sheds, some owners erected houses with lofts that offered additional privacy from the public,. This is evidence of a trend towards the deeper and more private double-pile houses. [Figure 5.14 and see Figure 5.11]. In the upper ranks, an increasing number of houses had shingled exterior finishes. An effort to quantify and describe the ranges of houses types shows certain patterns, but they are not straight line patterns; the apparent inconsistencies may reflect characteristics such as the age of the buildings or the date of arrival of the claimant on the island. [Table 5.1].

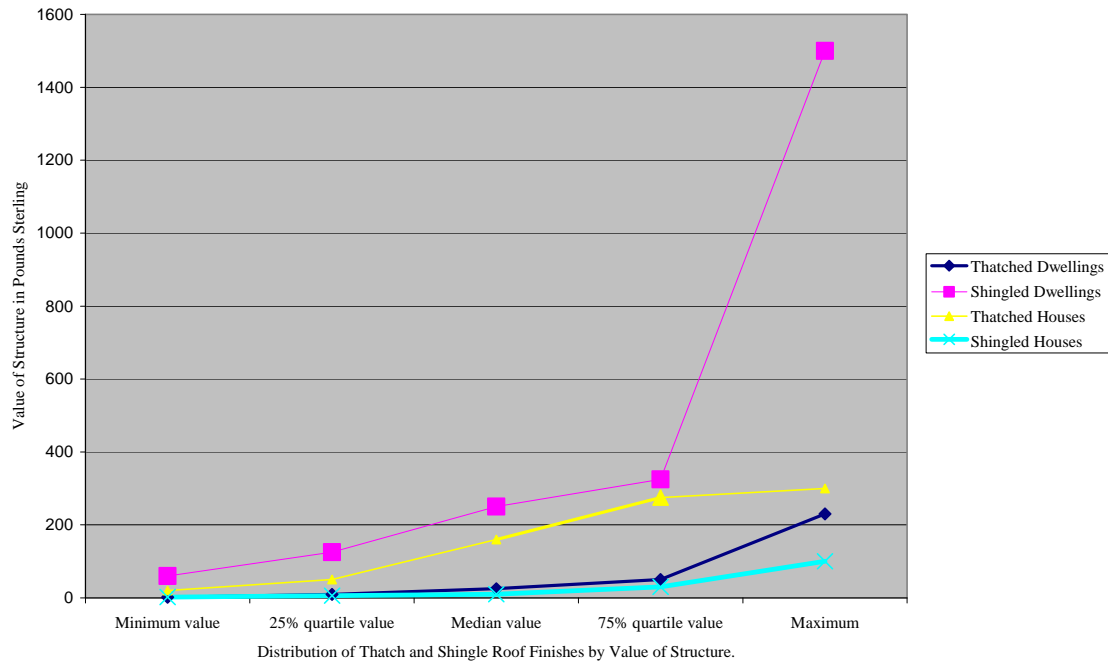


Figure 5.14 Outshot on the Arthurton house (ca. 1720) in Charlestown, Nevis. [Pat Green]

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<sup>34</sup> Gary Carson et al., "Impermanent Architecture in the Southern American Colonies," *Winterthur Portfolio* Autumn v.16, #2-3 (1981).

Table 5. 1 Distribution of Roof Finishes of the Residences.



From the descriptions, in general, it appears that the ‘two room’ houses were of the direct entry type, for there are no references to passages or chimneys in these houses. There had to be access from the house to the detached kitchen, and it is possible that this was accomplished with small inconspicuous doors to the exterior. On the matter of the stairs in houses with a loft, similar to Mary Winder’s, they were probably in a corner and seen as a utilitarian item. [Figure 5.15].



Figure 5.15. Staircase to the loft located in a corner of the hall in Hermitage House built circa 1700 in Nevis. (2004). [Hobson].

There is evidence of a practice of dividing the trading affairs from plantation affairs in the upper strata of society, among the merchants and planters. They maintained two houses, one in a port town and the other on the plantation. This was an emanation of the English aristocratic tradition and of the trend in polite circles towards functional specialization and privacy. The two-room form was typical of modest rural workers and of townspeople in Britain. In the absence of business houses, merchants and planters this type recommended itself for them to conduct their transactions in the clearly understood “hall and parlor” arrangement. The merchants and planters ensured domestic privacy by incorporating a shed, a loft overhead, or an entire floor upstairs. The interface between public and private was the first room entered, a reception space or former hall. There was no conflict with cooking, for that took place in a separate structure. Jededdiah

Hutchinson, a merchant, used this room for “a convenient shop and counting house”<sup>35</sup> and kept the second room for more private or personal activities, probably like a study or withdrawing room.<sup>36</sup> [See figures 5.11(2) & 5.2 ]

Major Biskett’s town house in Old Road Town was a valuable ‘two room’ type. [See figure 5.11(4)] The house was lofted with a hall for reception and a chamber on the ground floor. The loft chamber on the upper floor provided space for personal privacy:

one house in the old Road towne one Room 18 foot square ye Hall 20 foot long & 18 d<sup>o</sup>. Broad ye Chamber above, ye same dimensions built wth mastick & yello sandor timber boarded and shingled....£300.

The practice of using a compact house form in the town in contrast with a more extensive single story arrangement on the plantation is evident from examination of Biskett’s two houses. His country house had the ‘chamber, hall, chamber’ arrangement of internal spaces, which he told of in that order: “ye chamber 16 foot square, ye hall 18 foot long & 16 foot square, ye other chamber 12 foot long & 16 square”.<sup>37</sup>

It appears that James Reed’s dwelling house in Sandy Point, had a Jacobean multi-gabled appearance. This may have appeared somewhat old-fashioned or accretive in form if not for the symmetrical and ordered plan of the two main rooms:

With two Large Rooms fronting ye Street and another Room backward...ye 2 front Street Rooms of 28 foot long and 13 foot wide and the back Roome 18 foot long and 13 foot wide...£50.<sup>38</sup>

Major McClear’s town house was two stories high and 40 by 18 feet in plan with “a Hall & Chamber below and two Chambers above”.<sup>39</sup> [Figure 5.11 (5)]. He reported

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<sup>35</sup> Gillard et al. 59

<sup>36</sup> From the 1707/8 Report it appears that the term ‘parlor’ was not commonly used at that time in the Leewards.

<sup>37</sup> Gillard et al. 57.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 359.

that the structure was “framed”, which meant a high standard of carpentry, probably with mortise and tenon joints<sup>40</sup>, and all the timber structure, flooring and shingles, were of Caribbean hardwoods. He pointed out that the rafters were spiked in place, which suggests that generally rafters were merely tied to or notched over the plates. Spiking was a device to hold down the roof in hurricanes. This statement confirms the earlier discussions about roof damage in hurricanes being primarily due to inadequate, or inappropriate, construction practices or to the sacrificial techniques of the Caribs. [See section 4.2]. McClear valued the house at £300, in the upper quartile of house values on the island. The contents of the house indicate the gloss and luxury of the interior that contrasted with the bland shingled exterior. Most of the furniture was in the latest fashion, being japanned or lacquered, of olivewood, and the table was the *pièce de resistance*, for it was “flower’d with gold”. Another item that McClear lost gives an insight into the nature of the merchant class. He regretted his new broadcloth coat, which was trimmed with gold and lined with “double shagreen”.<sup>41</sup>

### 5.1.3 ‘Two room’ houses with ‘shades’ .

A few houses had ‘shades’ or verandas, and they were in the port towns, with one exception. Only affluent planters extended their town houses with ‘shades’ or verandas, which have been not solely because of the thermal improvement, but because they created a transitional social space between the public and the interior. The susceptibility

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 293.

<sup>40</sup> In the Chesapeake, the English frame referred to a quality of construction associated with the durable techniques of traditional English box framing, which is tightly fitted and with mortise and tenon joints. The alternative was the Virginia frame of with lap joints, riven members and earthfast construction. [Lounsbury, 131]

<sup>41</sup> Gillard et al. 292.



of ‘shades’ to damage in storm winds may have deterred the inhabitants from building them. The feature could have been introduced from Brazil by the Sephardim who moved to Nevis in the 1670’s. Such houses raised on stone foundations later, perhaps in the Victorian era, became common in the Leeward Island towns. [Figures 5.16 and 5.17].

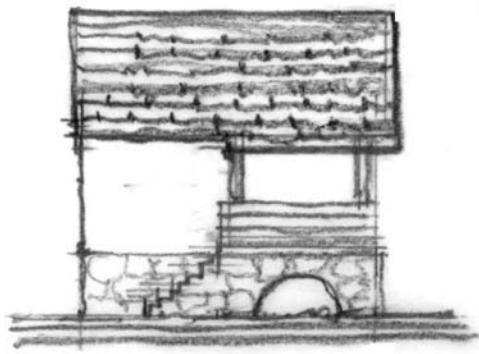


Figure 5.16a. Conjectural elevation of Jasper Verchild's shade entry house.



Figure 5.16b Town houses in Basseterre with a shade entry.

Figure 5.16 Town houses with a “shade” entry in St. Christopher. [Hobson].



Figure 5.17. A precedent for ‘shades’ in the Leeward Islands were the plantation houses in Pernambuco, Brazil .[ ca. 1634 by Albert Eckhout.].

Stephen Paine (1654 – 1711)<sup>42</sup>, a large landowner in St. Ann and St. John and one of the twelve Island Councilors, inserted a shade between his town house of ‘two rooms’ and the public. This increased privacy and improved the thermal comfort of the house. [See Figure 5.11 (6)] For some unknown reason, his losses in the French Raid were meager, totaling only £768, which is strange because the Paine family was exceedingly wealthy. The house in Sandy Point occasioned a large part of Paine’s losses:

A very good House in Sandy Point Town burnt which was divided into Two Rooms of 19 foot square and 2 shades of 8 foot broad and 14 foot long each, both ground and upper timber all of Mastick yellow sandor, Bullet tree ironwood and amaratto, well squared boarded round with good mastick boards to ye plate and ridgepole and partitions with y<sup>e</sup> same ye Roof boarded with Deal boards and shingled with bullet tree shingles and yell<sup>o</sup> Sander & except about 300 w<sup>ch</sup> was New England shingles. Ye large rooms floored with large square brick...£300.<sup>43</sup>

The town house of this wealthy man was a combination of traditional and innovative. The equal room sizes distinguish the house as being carefully designed; this practice is also evident in a number of the ‘two room’ houses of other prominent and cultured families.

Paine referred to a wall plate, which is indicative of an English box frame structure. Then he mentioned a ridgepole, a feature not associated with the box frame, but very effective in resisting hurricane and earthquake stresses. This indicates the direction in carpentry toward incorporating Carib techniques into very English practices.

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<sup>42</sup> St. Thomas Cemetery Inventory, St. Christopher heritage Society.

<sup>43</sup> Gillard et al. 24.

The structure was of Caribbean or tropical hardwoods; the New England shingles and Deal<sup>44</sup> were used only in locations where they could be easily replaced.

All the other persons who mentioned ‘shades’ or ‘shadery’ were members of the upper classes, which suggests that the feature was considered daring and that only the well-established families could risk the approbation., or the infrequent use was related to the cost.<sup>45</sup> Verandas are susceptible to hurricane damage, and only the very wealthy could afford the ‘sacrificial’ feature. Other references to shades on houses were, with one exception, on houses in the towns, and the owners were from leading families:

- Philip Verchild, a close acquaintance of the Lt. Governor, Michael Lambert, was well traveled and sophisticated if one extrapolates from his loss of “one new Violin cost £3 at New York”. Verchild added shades on the front and back of his lofted dwelling in Sandy Point Town. The structure of the ‘two-rooms’ was built of New England timber, whereas the shades were of Caribbean hardwoods<sup>46</sup>, which indicates that the shade was an extension and a separate element.
- Ralph and John Willet had a “storehouse in Palmetto Point of 2 rooms and a Shade ye 2 rooms 14 foot square the Shade 10 foot long and 18 foot broad.”<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Deal in England referred to softwood from Norway. In 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century softwood floors became common there, but oak was always preferred. Generally 1 ½” to 2” thick. The present pejorative use of the term is of recent origin.

<sup>45</sup> There is no evidence in the report of great wealth; however, Verchild’s is a place name in St. Kitts, as is Lambert’s, Bourryeau, Estridge, Con Phipps. Jaspor Verchild claimed for losses in the same area.

<sup>46</sup> Gillard et al. folio 59. “By one house in the town of Old Road New England timber with one room over boarded and shingled 30 foot long & 18 foot wide with one shade and ye second 14 foot long & 8 foot wide and one shade behind the house the whole length which was boarded underfoot (as also on the lower rooms) both shades of mastick and yellow sandor & ye whole building well boarded and shingled at...£250”. Note: Verchild’s was one of four persons who submitted Lambert’s claim to the Commissioners.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. 42.

- John Bourryau, an Island Councilor, had built a shade onto his lodging room on the plantation and erected a similar structure onto the storehouse he owned with John Garnet in Palmetto Point:<sup>48</sup>

48 foot long & 17 foot broad divided into 2 Rooms Boarded Round Excepting 18 foot in the length the Side next ye Street a Shade about 18 foot Long & 10 foot wide, the whole house and shade built with Choice hard Timber..Underpinn'd with a wall Round...£240:00:0<sup>49</sup>

The Bourryau's lodging room shade was the exception to the rule of location.

#### 5.1.4 Novel Configurations Of 'Two Room' Houses.

Another indication of innovation and novel configurations was the sequential 'two room' type; there were two clear examples of the type. The houses intimated a trend to a double pile arrangement and one was designed with classically inspired order. [See Figure 5.11(8)] The owners were reasonably well-to-do planters; Phipps had over 80 acres under sugar cane and Susanna and Mary Cole had a large boyling house, but did not mention the acreage.

Phipps and Cole had built the two room houses on their plantations and not in the port towns. Both were recent constructions; indeed, one was six years old, and the other was under construction when destroyed. The porch-hall-chamber arrangement was sequential and, by placing a porch between the hall and the public, ensured a high degree of interior privacy. Both houses had a lodging or outchamber to accommodate guests or for business affairs. The owners used the polite society terms of 'halls' and 'chambers' to describe the accommodation. The value of these houses was £150, which

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 17 & 26

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.26

was in the upper ranges in terms of value, of all the damaged domestic buildings. [Figure 5.18].

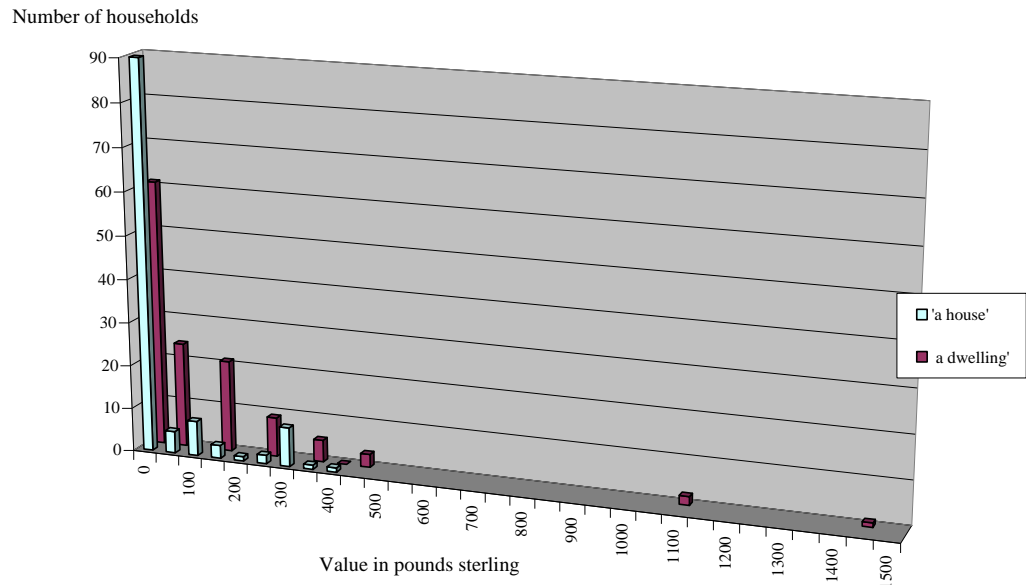


Figure 5.18. The Distribution of values of Domestic Structures on St. Christopher in 1706. [Hobson].

The Coles' house was not large, but the three dimensions of the house, 10,16 and 26, are an example of the 'Golden Mean'; the house was designed by a person trained in the principles of Renaissance architecture:

1 Dwelling House of a Hall and Chamber and porch, the Hall and Chamber of equal Dimensions being 26 foot Long and 16 foot wide and the porch 10 foot square. Some of the posts Lignum vitae and mastick but most Mountain timber Boarded Round as also the Roof and almost shingled, ye house not being quite finished with convenient outhouses...£150.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 64.

The equal dimensions of the two habitable cells indicate that the house was intended to appear ordered, controlled and probably symmetrical, for the widow and her daughter, Mary, in Cayon. The enclosed porch was to act as a buffer between the plantation and the interior in the setting where there was no loft. The Coles' losses, of £1078, due to the raid, included 'a chest of Law books', which suggests that Mr. Coles had been trained in the Law. Generally, the planters' plantation houses were a 'three room' type, but this house was an indication of new ideas in the population. In fact the Coles' expected to move from a planter's type house they owned into the more ordered, fashionable and deeper structure. The older house, though modest in size, was of the planter type:

Another Dwelling House of 3 Small Rooms all the posts of Leeward timber boarded round, 2 of the Rooms brickt and ye whole thatched...£60.<sup>51</sup>

That the older planter house had two rooms with bricked floors implies that the public had access to both of those rooms; brick was traditionally a utilitarian floor for heavy traffic. Brick would have been an easy way to put a floor in a *carbet*. Possibly one chamber served as a legal office<sup>52</sup> or study, for the Buor map, circa 1700, shows the Coles' house near the main island road. The family had resolved their privacy issues by accommodating overnight guests in "1 chamber of about 16 foot square all the posts of Leeward timber Boarded and Shingled with Bullet tree shingles and boarded under foot...£50".<sup>53</sup> The relative values of the chamber and original house indicate that the former had a good quality finish. The difference between the more accessible 'three room' house and the controlled-access new house reflects the society's increasing need for privacy and differentiation from the public.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 64.

<sup>52</sup> In the English system, a lawyer's office is still called his "Chambers".

<sup>53</sup> Gillard et al. 64.

When hypothesizing about the appearance of the Cole house, the weight is on the side of a double pile arrangement because of the Golden Mean proportions and the fact that Susana Coles did not describe the house as a rectangle as others did when referring to vernacular types. [Figure 5.19] One of the constraints on the development of the double pile may have been the lengths of timber available and the technology of roof construction, so there is a strong possibility that the house had two gables on the sides. This constraint was widespread in the colonies, and recent research has revealed that the original roof of the Palladian/Georgian house, Drayton Hall, in South Carolina, was originally comprised of several gabled components.

The Coles had acquired for their house fashionable, imported furniture and quantities of soft furnishing; this was an essential part of establishing one's social status in the pre-industrial age. [Table 5.2] The Coles' inventory of household effects lists the oval wall table, which was to be enhanced by the looking glass hung over it, perhaps the equivalent of the ornate fireplace. The shiny japanned chest-of-drawers and the other one with inlay work were both in the latest style popular in England.<sup>54</sup> They had lavished considerable expense on "new chintz curtains and counterpane for a bedfitting", pillows and bolsters, and the nine diaper tablecloths".<sup>55</sup> Well into the nineteenth century, only a privileged minority could afford to use quantities of fabric to finish their homes, according to James Ayres:

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<sup>54</sup> Edward Lucie-Smith, *Furniture: a Concise History* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1979). 73.

<sup>55</sup> Gillard et al. 64.

The abundant use of furnishing textiles served to reinforce social distinction to the extent that deployment of opulent drapery in an aristocratic portrait is more than a compositional device, it is an emblem of status.<sup>56</sup>

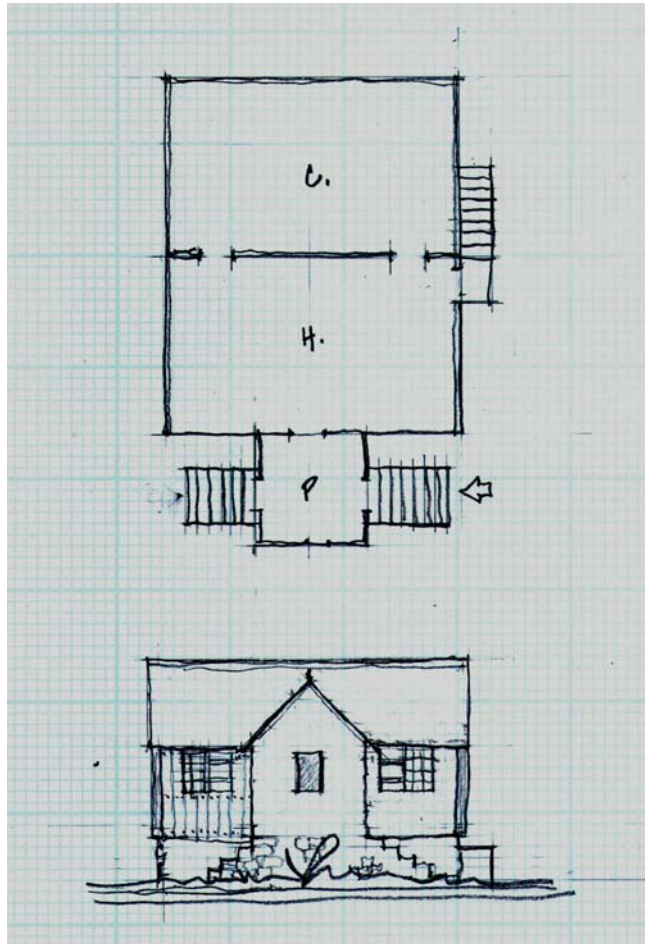


Figure 5.19. Conjectural layout and elevation of Susana Cole's house in Cayon, which was under construction when burnt. [Hobson].

<sup>56</sup> James Ayres, *Domestic Interiors. The British Tradition 1500-1850* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003).125.



**Table. 5.2 Partial Transcript of an Inventory of the Household effects lost by Mrs. Susanna and Mary Coles when the French invaded this Island in February and March 1706. St. Christopher. C0/243/2. folio 9.**

	£ sterling
8 silver spoons at 20' each	£ 8.00
4 plain finger rings	£ 4.00
1 pr. Diamond earrings	£ 10.00
a purse of gold about 40/	£ 40.00
coyned silver the value of	£ 11.10
1 Japan'd chest of drawers	£ 8.00
1 do. Inlayd	£ 6.00
2 ...fine plain muslin .....	£ 13.10
2 1.2 yards finer do.....	£ 1.05
1 yd. cambrick	£ 2.00
5 1/2 yards fine broad lace	£ 2.15
1..fine Chintz...abt. 20 yard	£ 7.10
By 20 yards flowered muslin...	£ 7.10
a sett of new chintz curtains and counterpane ...for a Bed fitting about 30 yards at 7.6	£ 11.05
a sett of halfe worne diaper curtains	£ 3.00
5 prs. New Holland sheets	£ 22.10
9 tablecloths of Diaper and Damask	£ 13.10
4 1/2 doz. Napkins do.	£ 8.02
1 large oak oval wall table with turned frame	£ 4.10
1 small do.	£ 3.00
6 halfeworne Russia Leather chairs	£ 3.00
1 chest Law Books at 40' value	£ 40.00
2 Feather beds, bolsters and pillows	£ 20.00
4 pewter dishes and 1 doz plates	£ 3.00
7 yards silk damask .....	£ 4.18
3 yards Same at	£ 1.03
2 silver forks	£ 2.00
wearing apparel	£ 60.00
a looking glass	£ 1.10
3 buccanner guns	£ 6.00

The other house of the two room deep type belonged to an Irish planter, Francis Phipps<sup>57</sup>, who, like Susannah Coles, used the terminology of ‘halls’ and ‘chambers’ to describe his six-year old “ dwelling house” “consisting of one large Hall & one chamber, one porch with one outchamber 16 foot square...£150”<sup>58</sup>. The structure of “hard timber”, probably Caribbean hardwood, was boarded with imported deal and shingled.

<sup>57</sup> Phipps was connected to Christopher Jeaffreson by the second marriages of their parents, in England. His brother Sir Constantine Phipps became Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

<sup>58</sup> Gillard et al. 46.

The furniture was not flamboyant, but of good quality and included cane chairs, which had become so fashionable that they were found even in the private apartments of Queen Anne<sup>59</sup>. Phipps' two red cedar tables and twelve caned chairs were appropriate for entertaining people of different social classes. In each chamber stood "a Chamber cedar table and a bedstead". There was, in addition, a red cedar "press" and "one Olive chest of drawers".

#### 5.1.5 Porches

Successful inhabitants added enclosed porches to their houses as a transitional space with the public and as a symbol of status. Only fourteen of the claimants reported porches, and apart from Clement Crooke, they were all at least moderately successful planters. They were well educated and owned chests of books, medical effects or framed paintings. Householders of this status typically referred to the spaces of their houses using the terminology of 'halls' and 'chambers' rather than rooms.

The porches mentioned were generally in the countryside. [Figure 5.20] They were approximately square, between 10 feet and 14 feet on a side; they had tile or brick floors, the hard surfaces indicating that they were semi-public areas. The porches were, with one exception, enclosed or "boarded all round" unlike shades, and appear to have been a recent introduction in St. Christopher because they were on new houses or were extensions. Two of the newer houses with porches belonged to Francis Phipps and the Widow Susannah Cole. The Pogson and Compton partners had a "porch added in the front" of their dwelling, and it was clearly an extension because the porch had a shingled

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<sup>59</sup> Lucie-Smith.. 72.

roof, whereas the rest of the house was cane thatched. The cane thatch of the house may have been a result of the frequent hostilities with the French and the damage to property, a factor which Governor Stapleton had noted in 1676 after an earlier round of warfare when he noted that the houses in St. Christopher were ordinary and thatched.

**Sample of descriptions of porches in St. Christopher in 1706. [CO 243/2]**

Name of Claimant	Location	Description of porch	Length, Ft.	Breadth, Ft
Phipps, Francis, Esq.	plantation	a porch		
Mead, Mrs. Penelope	plantation	a porch		
Crook, Clement	plantation	a porch		
Kerrio, Mr. Francis	plantation	a porch	10	10
Cole, Mrs. Susana	plantation	a porch	10	10
Pogson, Mr. John for himself and company	plantation	porch in ye front	12	12
Matthew, Lady	plantation	porch in ye front	14	14
Codrington, Christopher Esq.	plantation	2 porches	12	12
Vanbelle, Mr. Peter	plantation	frame of a porch		
Davis, John Esq.	-	lofted porch		
Crisp, Joseph Snr.	plantation	with an arched roof		
Estridge, Mrs. Ann	plantation	a porch		
Pembers, Mrs. Mary	plantation	a porch		
Panton, John	plantation	a porch		
Burrell, Capt. Henry	plantation	a porch with two plank benches	14	13

Figure 5.20. Sample of Description of Porches in St. Christopher in 1706. [Hobson].

The enclosed porch form satisfied a range of requirements. The porch entrance was well known in the English countryside as an entrance to houses of the gentry. In

East Anglia, scholars consider the porch a vestige of a turret or staircase tower that was appended on the long gentry houses typical of the region<sup>60</sup>. [See section 3.2] In other regions, the open-sided single storey porch was a symbol of a prosperous yeoman in the post-medieval house. In high rainfall areas, like Cumbria, an enclosed porch protected the interior floors.<sup>61</sup> There was also a defensive or controlling precedent that is relevant to the plantation situation; in the case of Henry Burrell, his porch was 14 feet long and 13 feet wide, and was clearly a transition zone because it was finished in the Dutch manner<sup>62</sup> with “two plank benches” as if to say “thus far and no further”.<sup>63</sup> In addition, the enclosed porch form withstood hurricanes because it kept the wind out of the house. This suggests that the Leeward Islanders were working with several precedents and mental models, in an era of stylistic emphasis on the entry doors and gatehouse. A similar preoccupation was evident in 1673 in Montserrat, where cross-gables and porch entries fronted the houses of the big planters. The open sided porch with arched roof and columns was the most classical and prestigious. This form was adopted by both Joseph Crisp Snr., President of the Island Council of St. Christopher in 1706, and Sir William Stapleton, Governor of the Leeward Islands circa 1673,.

From the *1707/8 Report*, it appears that most of the porches in St. Christopher were single-storied, but the some persons did have the cross-gable arrangement of a

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<sup>60</sup> Nicholas Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry. 1480-1680*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999). 205.

<sup>61</sup> Stephen Calloway and Elizabeth Cromley, eds., *The Elements of Style. A Practical Encyclopaedia of Interior Architectural Details from 1485 to the Present.*, Revised ed. (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). 503.

<sup>62</sup> Lewcock, Ronald.

<sup>63</sup> Gillard et al. 20.

“lofted porch”, or two-story porch<sup>64</sup>, which even more than the single story porch, evoked “the dignity of castles and towers”<sup>65</sup>. The lofted area provided additional storage or sleeping space.

In the evolving architecture of the island, the lofted porch with its English precedents did not preclude adding more foreign features to the same building. An example of this *mélange* and an attempt to integrate stylistically dissimilar elements was John Davis’ house in Christchurch, Nicholas Town. Davis was probably a medical man. His residence boasted both a ‘shade’ and a ‘lofted porch’.<sup>66</sup> The “dwelling house”, built of Caribbean hardwoods, was 52 feet long by 16 wide. It was well framed with a wall plate, but only boarded and not shingled. Boards typically ran vertically to assist the rapid drying of the joints, a practice still evident in the older houses of the Leewards. [Figure 5.21] Davis’ accommodation was comprised of “a Hall paved w<sup>th</sup> tile two Chambers floored with boards a large porch paved and lofted with Doors and Windows to Shut close & a Shade paved with Tile Vallore...£200.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Lofted porch: in domestic architecture in southern N. American colonies, the upper part of the entrance towers often contained porch chambers connected to the second floor [if existing], which functioned as service or sleeping rooms. As early as the 1690’s, a few buildings had completely open porches whose roofs were supported by columns or posts. [Lounsbury. 285]

<sup>65</sup> Cooper. 59.

<sup>66</sup> Gillard et al. 397.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. 397.



Figure 5. 21. Vertical boarding on a nineteenth century house in Charlestown, Nevis. (Courtesy of Nevis Historical and Conservation Society).

#### 5.16 ‘House Of Three Rooms’

Typically the house of a sugar planter was a variant of the ‘three room’ type, which is evident from as early as the 1670’s. Some thirty percent of all the houses damaged in 1706 conformed to the type. [See Figure 5. 1] It is possible to distinguish a number of the houses of ‘old inhabitants’ which appear to date from the early days of settlement; these houses substantiate that the ‘three room’ planter house was essentially a syncretism of the *carbet* and the traditional English farmhouse of three rooms. Among the planters houses some were quite modest with values starting as low as £9, but the median value of £60 was well above that of the overall population of houses. The relatively high values reflects the extent to which wealth was concentrated around sugar production.

In a similar manner to the ‘two-room’ houses, there was considerable variation within the ‘three room’ type. Apart from the basic planter house, with or without porch, several of the most prominent planters elaborated the basic ‘three room’ form to four or more rooms or introduced fashionable features or forms. They were likely to refer to ‘halls’ and ‘chambers’ rather than ‘rooms’ and were about twice as likely to describe their residence as a ‘dwelling house’ than as a ‘house’. The import of the terminology is not quantifiable, but it has connotations of gentility or land-ownership.

The planters described the basic ‘three-room’ type as rectangular in plan with a symmetrical internal arrangement that was close to three times as long as wide. The roof spans varied marginally and, even in the finer houses, held close to the span of sixteen feet preferred by persons of English heritage. The median of roof spans was 16 feet, but 75% of the houses had spans of 17 feet and under. Based on the contents of the houses, it appears that the modest planter houses were used more like the original work-hall-chamber of the European longhouse. The grander planter houses, were more like the ‘double-parlor’ arrangement of pre-Georgian England. In a few cases, particularly where there were four rooms, the descriptions suggest a sequential arrangement in keeping with the *appartements* of the aristocracy in Europe. In general, the houses were similar to the former Spanish houses in Jamaica described by Sir Hans Sloane.

Several of the ‘old inhabitants’ houses illustrate the early stages of the evolution from *carbet*-like farmhouse to genteel planter house. It is significant that the owners were Island Councilors in 1706 and exceedingly wealthy inhabitants. Two houses had round ends, and others had utilitarian brick floors rather than the tile or wooden floors of

more recent and more fashionable houses. In fact, there are indications that the older structures were falling into disuse.

James Ward's plantation house had two round ends and was close to the full *carbet* form. The Ward family had been prominent on the island from as early as 1639, when a Col. Clement Ward, spelled *Oeverard* in French documents, signed a renewal of the partition treaty with the French.<sup>68</sup> The clarity of the house form suggests that it may have dated from the very early days of settlement. The Wards no longer paid much attention to the house, which is indicated because they had not rebuilt the kitchen in stone or upgraded the hearth wall. James Ward related that the "dwelling house [was] about 66 foot long & 16 Broad containing 3 rooms and 2 round ends, partitions and floors of Boards and Bricks...£60"<sup>69</sup>. [Figure 5. 22].

In 1706, John Bourryau was an Island Councilor, and his claim of £2287 was in the top quartile of the total. The slate tombstone of one "John Bourrya", deceased in 1667, which is still legible in the Trinity Church graveyard, confirms his lineage as an 'old inhabitant'. The Bourryau family had the typical components of a plantation message: a main house, pigeon house, steward and cook room and a lodging room. The main house was similar to the Westbury house of 1687 in Nevis in that it had only one round end. Internally were a hall and two chambers, Caribbean hardwood posts that were probably earthfast, and a utilitarian brick floor throughout. The vertical boarding may have leaked in the round end when it rained; however, that was the Carib technique that provided stability during hurricanes and a comfortable interior during fine weather:

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<sup>68</sup> Sieur Philipe de Bouvilliers Bailly de Poincy and Colonel Clement Ward, "Entre Sieur Philipe de Bouvilliers Bailly de Poincy et honorable Colonel Clement Ward " in *Microfilm: Archives Nationales (France)* (Basseterre: National Archives of St. Kitts, 1639).

<sup>69</sup> Gillard et al. 66.



A Dwelling House 55 foot long, 18 foot wide, Consisting of a Hall, 2 Chambers & one Round End built with Hard Timber Mastick Lignum vita Iron wood and Yellow Sandor posts boarded round brikt under foot and covered with thatch...£200.00.<sup>70</sup> [Figure 5.22]

The kitchen was wooden, which suggest that the house was not frequently used. In the increasingly genteel society in which he participated, it is not surprising that Bourryau felt compelled to build a fashionable ‘lodging room’ with a veranda, either for guests or for his own temporary residence. The lodging room was well finished and worth £70:

16 Foot squar’d Choice timber plained Boarded Round, boarded and shingled with Ironwood and Yello. Sandor shingles also boarded underfoot and a shade of 16 foot long and 8 foot wide boarded and shingled.

Edward Gillard was another of the twelve Island Councilors, one of the Commissioners of the *1707/8 Report* and clearly a man of high social status. The Gillards’ plantation house did not have round ends, or he did not mention it. The plaster finish of lime “all around” suggests an effort to produce a water-tight and fire-resistant thatched roof structure. The liming of thatch roofs was a medieval European practice to decrease the fire risk structure. The plastering of walls may have been for water-proofing. Two other atypical features of this house were the width of twenty feet, which is unusually wide for an English structure, and the fact that the structure is not of Caribbean hardwood:

A Dwelling House, forty-eight feet in length & twenty in breadth of ye Isl<sup>d</sup> timber, all squared containing three rooms w<sup>t</sup> partitions boarded. Ye roof thatcht and plastered with lime all round.... £80”.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid. folio 17.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. 15.

The low value assigned to the house with Island timber frame suggests that it was not recognized as being of similar value as the earth-fast structures made of imported Caribbean hardwoods.

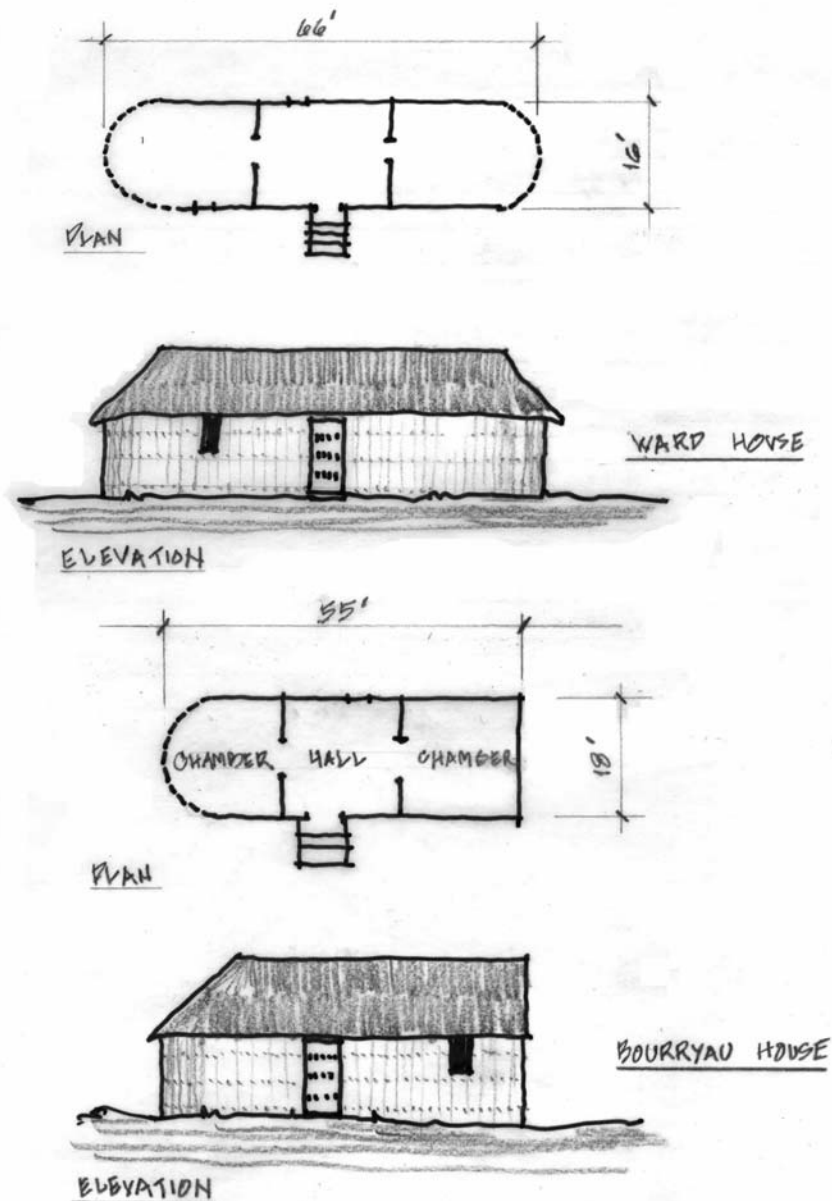


Figure 5.22. Conjectural plans and elevations of the plantation house of the Ward and Bourryau families. [Hobson].

Gillard had another house in Old Road Town of the two-room type that appears modest for a wealthy man being worth only £100; nevertheless it observed the genteel trait of sequential floor finishes:

Thirty-six feet in length & sixteen in breadth containing two rooms. One boarded, ye other brikt underfoot. Ye whole frame sawed. Ye roof boarded and shingled in Bully tree shingles...£100.<sup>72</sup>

The implication of the 'sawn frame' is that it was common for rounded tree trunks to be used in house framing or he would not have mentioned the superior finish. The cook room and steward room structure required only £10 for repairs, which suggests that, in line with recent legislation, it was in built of stone.

The furniture that Gillard lost suggests that he enjoyed a comfortable, but not flamboyant lifestyle that was, perhaps, similar to Christopher Jeaffreson's in the 1670's. Between his houses, Gillard owned three bedsteads, brass candlesticks, a looking glass, ubiquitous pewter dishes, a cupboard and wooden and matted [upholstered] chairs. He had sent his more valuable possessions to Nevis for safekeeping, but unfortunately lost the highly valued featherbed and bolster, silver hilted sword and belt as well as women's clothes, a cloak and a trunk.

The 'three room' planter house, even in its basic form, satisfied a variety and range of householders and lifestyles. This is evident in the examination of a series of these houses. At the lower end of the economic scale was Francis Phipps' overseer, Thomas Harris, who may have been an aspiring planter possibly on rented land. At the other end of the scale was Lady Matthew's luxurious house.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 15.

Francis Phipps presented the claim for Thomas Harris' three room "house". It may be significant that in the same document, Phipps' described his own residence as a "dwelling house". Harris had lived in a small structure:

A House Cont<sup>t</sup>. 3 rooms 30 ffoot Long & 12 ffoot boarded Round ye Sides, the posts and Cratches of Hard Timber the Roof mountain timber and thatcht...£30.<sup>73</sup>

The contents listed suggest a workaday house, for there were 400 yams, a yellow Sandor table and bench, a red cedar bench, as well as two wooden chairs and a bedstead. [Figure 5.23(2)]. One speculates that the yams were in an end room, the table and benches were in the middle room for meals and fellowship, and the bedstead occupied the other end room. The chairs could be placed where needed, possibly at the head and foot of the table for Thomas and his wife to preside over meals.

Andrew Thanvett of Sandy Point Parish was a successful Huguenot planter. He had nearly sixty acres planted in sugar cane and his property losses of £1812, in the upper 25% of personal losses in the raid.<sup>74</sup> However, he valued his house at only ten pounds more than Phipps had valued Thomas Harris', this despite the presence of a three-foot high raised basement that extended the full perimeter of the building. [Figure 5.23 (3)]. The stone foundation, necessary to keep the floor dry, would also have kept the house cool, and it accommodated the slope of the land. The low value may be associated with the fact that he used local 'mountaine' posts for the structure and not mastick or lignum vitae. 'Mountaine' and country timber were not the durable slow growing tropical

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 46.

<sup>74</sup> In the 1726 *Commission Report* he was mentioned as "An old French gentleman here, Monsieur Thanvett, a man of great worth and great suffering for his Religion, had lands patented to him, a quantity of about 100 acres, this was before the Treaty of Reswick....The peace of 1697 restoring the French to their possessions he was ousted of his...". [Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 153]

hardwoods like mastick and yellow sandor because by the mid-1600s, the island's hard wood forests had been depleted and cut over for sugar cane cultivation., Thanvet reserved the hardwood or "good timber" for the siding. His premises, or messuage, included a wooden house and a large stonework kitchen:

One Dwelling House 47 ftt long & 17 wide Con<sup>t</sup> 3 rooms a Wall round ab<sup>t</sup> 3 ftt high boarded part good timber ye posts mountaine of this Island and Thatched...£40.<sup>75</sup>

One Steward Room and Kitchen 30 ftt long & 16 wide all wall ye roofoe thatched mountaine timber ...£20.<sup>76</sup>

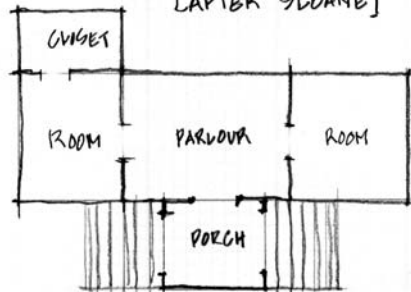
The Huguenot furnished his somewhat rustic dwelling with furniture of Caribbean woods, but he maintained the practice of owning two tables for dining. The short list of furniture indicates that there was a hall containing the two "large tables", one of cedar and the other of mastick. For seating, there were six cedar chairs, four stools and a number of chests and trunks. The sleeping furniture included the family bedstead, three "couches" or lower beds for actual sleeping. In addition, there was a large cupboard made of cedar that presumably held the tableware. The household was looked after by seven or more Negroes who were "All fitt for Serving in a House Sowing Washing Ironing".

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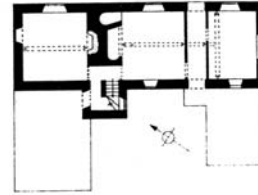
<sup>75</sup> Gillard et al. 91.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. 91

1A. SPANISH HOUSE TYPE IN JAMAICA  
[AFTER GLOANE]



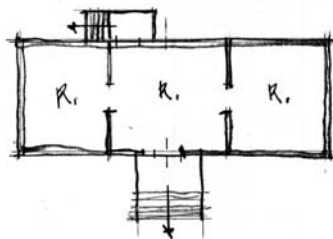
1B. THREE-CELL ENGLISH HOUSE  
OF 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY IN OXFORDSHIRE  
[AFTER MERCEY] N.T.S.



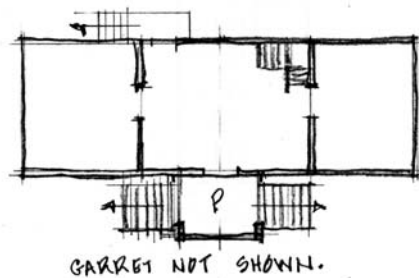
2. THOMAS HARRIS' HOUSE



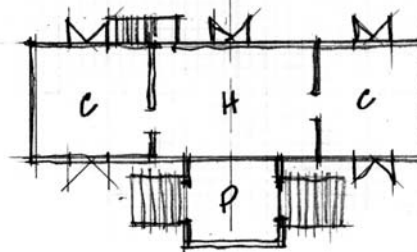
3. ANDREW THANVET'S DWELL<sup>G</sup> HSE



4. PETER VANDERLE'S NEW HOUSE



5. LADY MATTHEW'S DWELLING HOUSE (A)



5B.

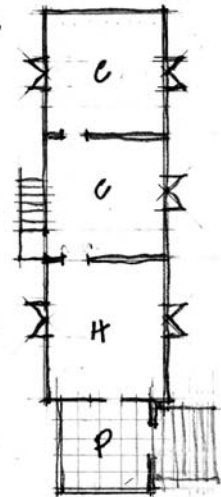


Figure 5.23 Various configurations of the three-room houses in St. Christopher in 1706. [Hobson].

Francis Kerrio had an atypical arrangement, one in which the steward room was part of the main house. The arrangement suggests that either the house dated from an earlier period, or Kerrio was a relative newcomer and had retained some customary English practices:

Ye Hall 20 foot long 16 foot Broad, a Chamber 16 foote Square Steward Room 10 foot long & 16 wide a Porch 10 foot square boarded round the Hall steward room & porch brikt & the Chamber boarded value...£150.<sup>77</sup>

However, there were other examples of such steward rooms in houses of prominent families. John Pogson and Joseph Crisp both had steward rooms, pantries or butteries within the envelope of the main house. This may have been in order to secure the valuable silverware.

One of the newer plantation houses of ‘three rooms’ belonged to another Huguenot, Peter Vanbelle. According to his statement, his “new” house had at least four habitable cells, including a “garret at the top”. In token of his social status and loyalty to his adopted culture, he was about to complete the porch, which he had already framed:

By 1 New house in the Plantation of 3 Rooms of 60 foot long 20 foot broad--& wi<sup>th</sup> Good timber & brick and Lime as also a Garret at the Top togethe<sup>r</sup> wi<sup>th</sup> a Frame of a porch...£300.<sup>78</sup>

The exact 1:3 whole number ratio is indicative of order and classical design influences. However, Vanbelle’s French culture is evident in the twenty foot width of the house and his taste for brick structure. This house was distinctive in its construction, which was either of brick with lime mortar or was half-timbered with brick infill and plastered. [Figure 5.23 (4)].

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid. 120.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 75.

Vanbelle's claim highlights the diversity of buildings of his premises, for in contrast to his new brick house, valued at £300, were the retainers' "wild cane and thatched houses burnt", which were more valuable than the "Negro houses" mentioned in the report. He valued at £20 "one Wild cane house where Mr. Salutat lived" and at £5 and £6 the two thatched houses where "Mr. Neguide did live" and "where a house Negro woman did live".<sup>79</sup>

Of equal value to Vanbelle's was Lady Matthew's "large dwelling house". The Matthew family was prestigious, having produced at least two governors in the Leewards before 1727.<sup>80</sup> The planter house had three rooms, a porch and possibly a garret. Lady Matthew spoke of her house using the terms 'hall' and 'chambers'.<sup>81</sup> The interior gives some inkling of the standard of the accommodation of the large planters, and of the tendency to confine the display of wealth to the interior of the house, while generally conforming externally to the local aesthetic. The house was expensively finished; the furniture and hangings were imported from England or Europe. The owner or her husband must have been educated and cultured, for she referred to a chest of books and prints that were lost. In fact, Lady Matthew led a comfortable life. She went out driven in her "chariott lined with velvet, ye cushions and horse cloths ye Same with harness for 6 horses" or in her "chaise lined with cloth and necessities".<sup>82</sup>

The Buor map shows the property in Sandy Point Parish located well above the town to benefit from the breezes. The house, 60 feet long by 18 wide and 7 feet to the

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 75.

<sup>80</sup> Lady Matthew was probably the widow of Sir Abednego Matthew, the lieutenant-governor deceased in 1704, and mother or step-mother of Charles Matthew who was governor-general of the Leewards in 1726.

<sup>81</sup> Gillard et al. 70.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. 70.



wall-plate, was envisaged as a rectangle that was “divided into a Hall and 2 Chambers with a Porch 14 foot square in ye front”. It was raised on a two-foot high stone foundation, had a shingle finish and doors and windows of red cedar. [Figure 5.23(5)] The porch had a tiled floor, which transitioned into the more polite part of the house, where the floors were of deal<sup>83</sup>, possibly bleached from scrubbing with sand. The floor covering of “1 piece haircloth cont. 25 Yards....£2:00:00” was a type of rush mat made in England; the “turkeyworkt carpet” lay on a table. The English typically placed carpets on tables, whereas the Spanish put them on the floor.<sup>84</sup> [Figure 5.24 ]. The wooden floor of the hall and the haircloth suggest that it was suitable for polite entertainment and company.

The finishes of the Matthew house indicate that joiners were available and working on the island. Both the partitions and the interior of the “sides” of her wooden house were paneled “linenwise” in the traditional English pattern of better houses. [Figure 5.25 (a)]. The cultured and fashionable taste of the owners is evident in “8 Large prints with Black frames” hung from the floor-to-plate paneling and the attention to illumination with four [wall-hung] sconces.<sup>85</sup> Partitions typically did not rise to the ceiling, so the partitions rose only to the seven foot height of the wall-plate. This practice was common in England and it worked well in the tropics because it allowed for air movement. In cases where the partitions were carried higher, the owner mentioned it, as did John Pogson, saying that his house was “partitioned quite up to the roof”.<sup>86</sup> The cedar windows may have been sash, perhaps similar to Joseph Crisp’s “cedar sashed

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<sup>83</sup> Deal was a Baltic softwood. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the softwood floors became common.

<sup>84</sup> Ayres. 94.

<sup>85</sup> Gillard et al. 70.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. 78.

winders”<sup>87</sup>, and Lady Matthew spoke of the fringed curtains hung in front of them, and the embroidered curtain in front of a door.<sup>88</sup>

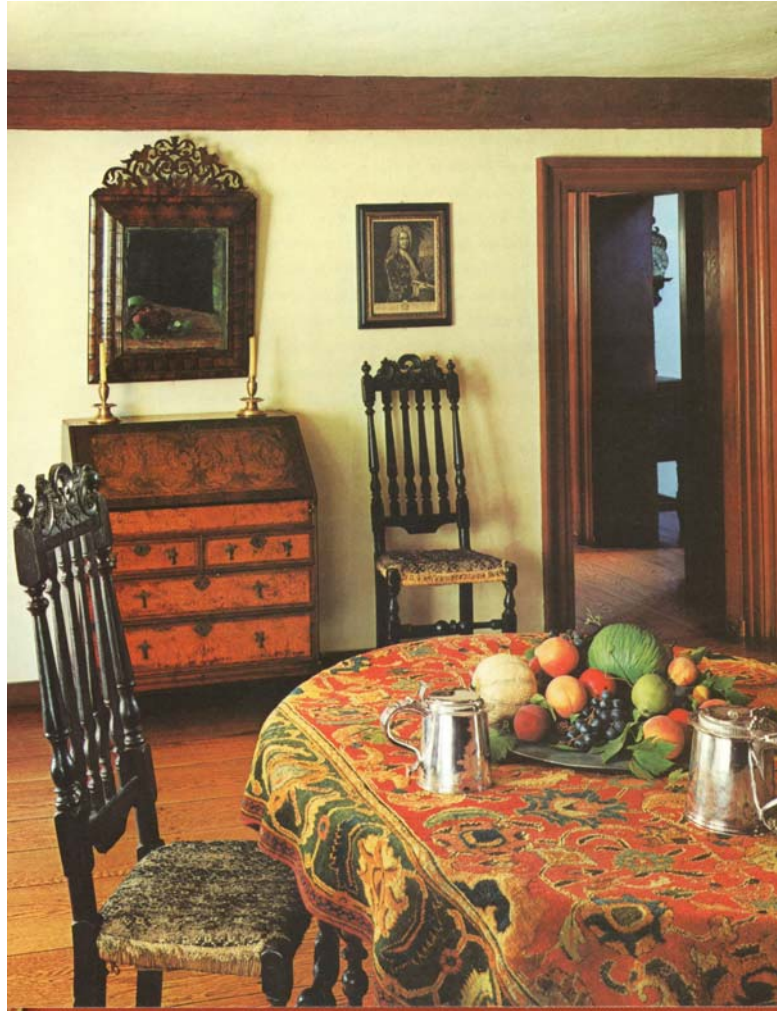


Figure 5.24. Upholstered or Stuffed chairs in a 17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century setting and a Turkey Work carpet on the Table. [Lucie-Smith].

In this luxurious setting, there were “two feather beds” with bolsters and pillows, one fitted with “camlet curtains” and a painted calico quilt, and there were several pairs of Holland sheets. In the hall or one of the chambers was a “squab” couch and pair of

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid. 38.

<sup>88</sup> The lights were purchased and imported separately by householders.

stands finished in the popular japanned finish. In addition, there were fifteen “caine chairs” and four “stuffed stools” as well as other items in the latest English fashion of the time. [Figure 5.25 (b)].

Lady Matthew’s house substantiates that, in the Leewards a structure of posts planted in the ground was not an indication of a lack of commitment to the locale, and second, that posts encased in stone was a common practice. Similar to other fine houses, Lady Matthew’s was “underpinned all Round w<sup>th</sup> a Stone wall” that was two feet high.<sup>89</sup> In addition, the house had “Ground timber of Lignum vita mastick and iron wood” for the structure. This construction system where the posts were planted in the ground, for stability in earthquakes and hurricanes, and were also encased in stone foundation walls was common in the better houses of Nevis and St. Christopher, for it served many purposes. The system worked because, as seen at the Hermitage house (ca. 1700) in Nevis, selected tropical hardwood posts can survive for hundreds of years. Precedents for this system are found in early seventeenth century practices in Ireland and in Carib structures. These practices may differ from the “impermanent construction techniques” of the North American colonies, where buildings with “post in the ground construction” did not sit on foundation walls.<sup>90</sup> Indeed the earthfast posts of Caribbean hardwoods indicate a strong commitment to the locale. The contemporary comments of Rev. Smith from Nevis in the second decade of the century indicate that the local timber was not suitable for building construction, which drove wealthy inhabitants to import the hardwood at great cost:

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<sup>89</sup> Gillard et al. 70.

<sup>90</sup> Lounsbury, ed. 126. Roger H. Leech, "Impermanent Architecture in the English Colonies of the Eastern Caribbean: New Contexts for Innovation in the Early Modern Atlantic World.," *Building Environments. Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*. X (2005).

The gentlemen of Nevis and St. Christopher would never have purchased at a dear rate (to serve as Posts to their houses and sugar mills) Ironwood and *Lignum vitae*, which were brought from distant Islands (Deseada, St. Bartholomew, Santa Cruz etc) for that purpose [to serve as posts].<sup>91</sup>



Fig. 5.25 (a) Traditional English Linenfold paneling of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. [Calloway].



Figure 5.25 (b). A ‘cained’ chair of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. [Hobson]

Figure 5.25. Examples of Linenfold paneling and furniture of the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries in England.

<sup>91</sup> Rev Mr. William Smith, *A Natural History of Nevis and the rest of the English Leeward Charibee islands in America*. (Cambridge: J. Bentham, printer to the University., 1745). 44.

In 1706, there were only a few multi-gabled type houses like Christopher Jeaffreson's on plantations; this is not surprising because those houses tended to have problems of leaking at the valleys. This type is suggested in the records by descriptions giving the dimensions of the separate rooms, rather than of a rectangular base. Captain Burrell, who rented the Jeaffreson property of Wingfield Manor in 1695, had one of these traditional multi-gabled houses; it may have been similar to the image of the original house in the survey map of Wingfield Manor in 1682. [See figure 4. 8] Jeaffreson wrote about Burrell's intention to place a French-built house, but the house was more like three adjoining rooms or an 'E' house. [Figure 5.26]. Burrell was an Island councilor and bemoaned the loss of his "library of books of English, Latin and Greek"<sup>92</sup>. Thus, it is clear that the accretive nature of this residence was the preference of the wealthy and cultured man. It is possible that he preferred the wide French roof span of twenty feet, which was not common in houses of the English quarters, or may be related to the availability of houses without round ends.

Burrell reported that his "dwelling house of three rooms" had a Hall of 24 by 19 feet, one chamber that was 21 by 20 feet and the other 23 by 20 feet. The floors were finished in the traditional way with the hall being paved for heavy traffic and meals, and the chambers having wooden floors. He also had an enclosed porch 14 foot long and 13 foot wide; it was paved and finished in with "two plank benches".<sup>93</sup> The structures were of a high quality, being constructed of Caribbean hardwoods, 'Gregory' and 'Black Cinnamon' (a scented wood), with bullywood shingles, but he said, almost apologetically, that he had repaired the roof of the hall with New England rafters. This

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<sup>92</sup> Gillard et al. 22.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. 22.

may have been in order to adjust the roof to the new location. The house value of £250 did not include the vast cook room and steward room with an oven.

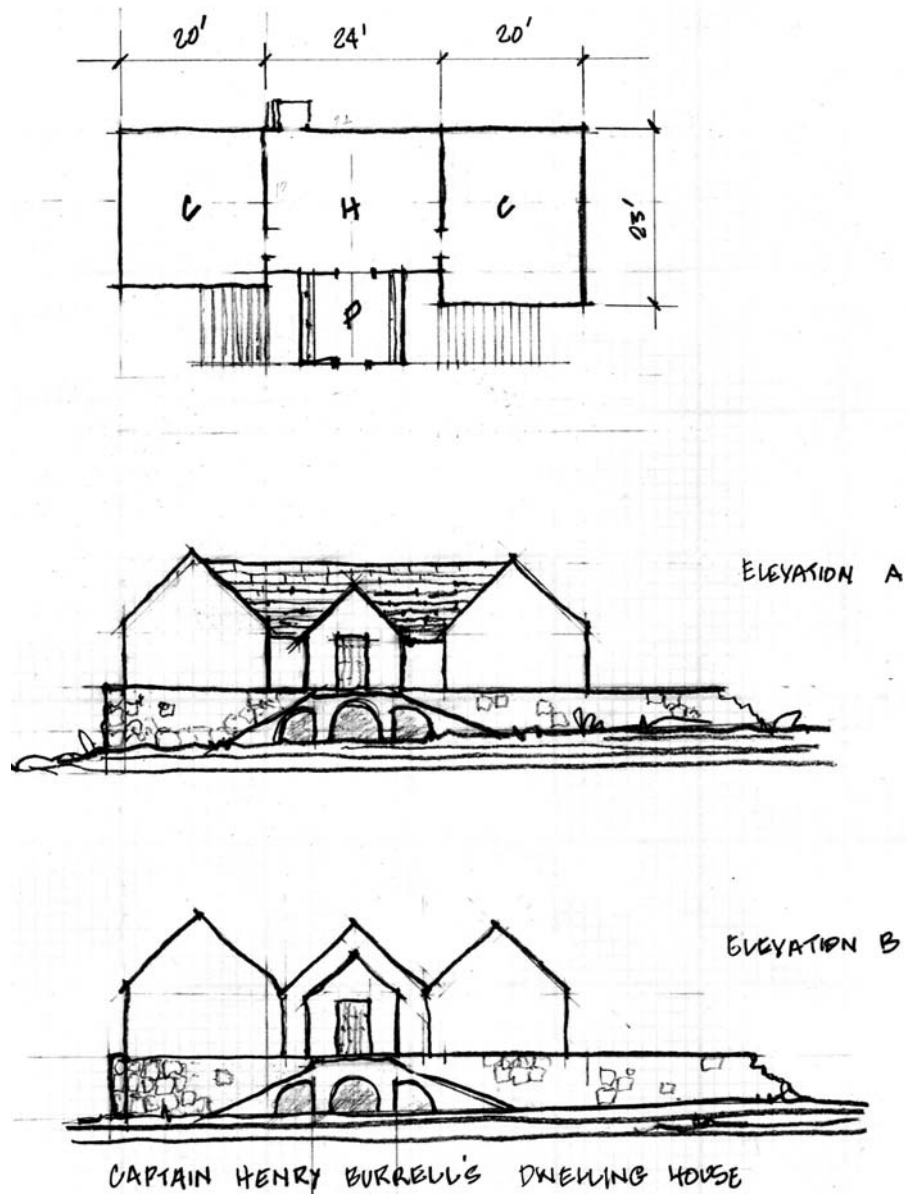


Figure 5.26. Conjectural plan and alternative elevations of Captain Henry Burrell's residence in St. Christopher in 1706. [Hobson].

#### 5.1.7 .Houses Of Four Rooms And More.

At the upper end of the housing spectrum were the houses with four or more rooms, a proto double pile and a ‘storehouse dwelling’ which do not fall into neat categories like the smaller ones. For most of them, there is not adequate information for conjecture about their appearance. The issue is the configuration of the houses. Were they merely elongated rectangles in plan, with the long side, or short side to the street or approach, or were they “H” or “E” houses?

Penelope Mead/Maid’s claim was for a “large dwelling house with a Hall 3 Chambers & a Porch” on the plantation.<sup>94</sup> However, the image of the house on the *Buor Map* is of a two-story “H” house and not an extended version of a three- room planter house. [Figure 5.27]. This distinction may be in recognition of her great wealth because the houses on the map appear to be stylized; Penny Mead/Maid’s house is the only one of the H- type shown on the map and that has some significance.

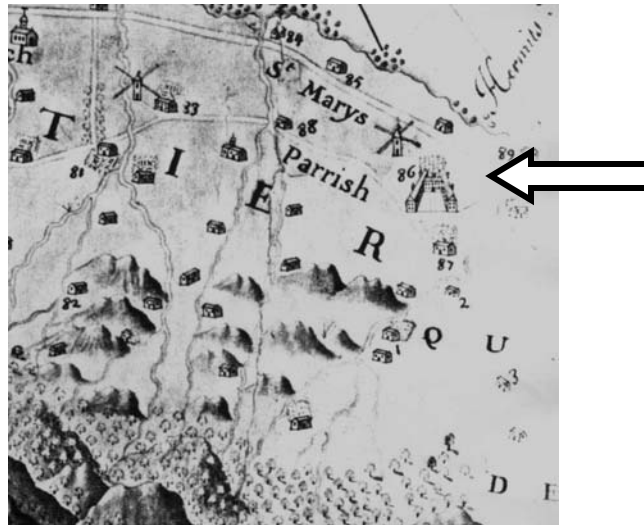


Figure 5.27. Detail of the Buor Map showing Penelope Mead’s Residence as an ‘H’ house. A note on the map states “*Les petits habitans ne font pas marqués.*”

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. 55.

The 1707/8 Report indicates that there were a number of houses with elongated structures, four and more times as long as wide, with the gable to the street, generally in port towns. The Buor *Map* shows a gable to the street orientation in towns. It is not clear whether the houses had one or two stories. Further investigation may reveal whether this was the early form of the ‘blouse and skirt’ town houses of later periods, which had storehouses or business places on the ground floor. A prime example of this form was the main residence of the Lieutenant-governor Michael Lambert:

One dwelling house and storehouse in Old Road Towne of 4 Rooms 60 foot in length & 13 foot in breadth, posts of lignum vita, mastick and Ironwod, Rafters squared of Mastick, Cinnamon & yellow Sandor, boarded all round and one partition of mastick boards with 2 partitions of local board, boarded overhead and shingled with ironwood and other hardwood shingles of this county walled and underpinned round with doors, windows, locks and bolts... £400.<sup>95</sup>

It is a question whether these structures were similar to later colonial structures with possible West Indian influences such as the single houses of Charleston, South Carolina, and the shotguns of Louisiana. Another interesting fact is that two of the owners were Huguenots.<sup>96</sup> These elongated structures include

- Gabriel Papin’s lofted house in Sandy Point Town, which was 60 feet long and only 17 wide.<sup>97</sup>
- The vintner James Ramsey’s dwelling house in Old Road Town, of four rooms that was 60 feet long and 17 wide.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.32

<sup>96</sup> It may be significant that a Phillippe Lambert was a leading colonist in the English lands in 1667.

<sup>97</sup> Gillard et al. 393: “A house of four rooms & a loft cratches and Rafters of loward Timber with a hall round ye said house abt 60 foot long & 17 foot wide...£300.”

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. 132.



- The even more attenuated ‘rectory’ house belonging to the French Protestant Congregation, which was 66 feet long and 12 feet wide, shingled, “with a Small Room about 10 foot Square Boarded & Shingled”.<sup>99</sup> Was the little room a porch or an out chamber?

There are many features and associations of these houses that only further research can clarify. There is the question about whether the configuration of the elongated houses was similar to the Rectory of Middle Island (ca 1720) and to older houses of Basseterre. [Figure 5.28].

One can infer from the description of John Pogson’s large house that closets were utilitarian extensions and may have been used for a buttery or pantry. This may explain why Pogson did not mention that there was a steward room attached to his eighteen foot square detached kitchen. The information suggests that the house had a proto-double pile arrangement:

A dwelling house of 66 foot in length and 19 in breadth & Seven in ye wallplate divided into Hall 2 chambers, 2 closetts containing buttery and pantry with a Porch 12 foot square in ye front.<sup>100</sup>

John Panton’s house was one of the few that had a full two-rooms deep form. Probably the hall and chambers were on the entry side of the house; the closets, buttery and utilitarian spaces were likely to the rear:

A dwelling house 58 foot long about 27 foot wide consisting of a Large hall, 2 Chambers, a porch, a Large Buttery and Clisett was paved with Square tile. The Chmaber boarded of timber was mastick lignum vita and other hard Timber Squared all well boarded and Covered with Cedar Shingles. The spouts made of lead...£450.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. 410.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. 78.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. 8.

It appears that the greatest expenditure and attention was paid to the comfortable and luxurious furniture and fittings. [Table 5.2].



Figure 5.28 (a). The Rectory at Middle Island, St. Kitts constructed circa 1720. (2006).



Figure 5.28 (b). A longitudinal house on Losack Rd, Basseterre, St. Kitts. (2006).

Figure 5. 28. Exterior of longitudinal residences in St. Christopher. [Hobson].

**Table 5.3. Partial Transcript of an Inventory of the household effects lost by John Panten when the French invaded this island in February and March 1706.**  
**CO/243/2. folio 9.**

	£ sterling
a large walnut press about 9 foot high 7 foot wide four doors to open with drawers locks and keys.	£ 20.00
A large chest of drawers	£ 8.08
1 doz. Turkey leather chairs	£ 18.00
1 large turkey leather Couch	£ 3.12
1 large Elbow turkey leather chair	£ 3.00
1 large Bermudas cedar do.	£ 1.10
6 Turkey leather chairs halfe worne	£ 8.00
2 very fine Bermudas chairs	£ 1.10
1 large walnutt ovale table finely turned	£ 6.00
1 cedar side table with 2 very fine stands that was Japanned	£ 4.10
1 India Japanned Tea table with a turned frame	£ 4.00
a walnutt Bedstead turned with a Cornice about a foot deep finely japanned	£ 10.00
2 high bedsteads and 2 low do.	£ 6.00
a large looking glass	£ 4.10
1 large walnutt Chest	£ 2.10
1 cedar do. With a box	£ 1.18
2 Deal chests	£ 2.08
5 .....of the best sort of pewter	£ 10.00
15 large pewter dishes .....of the same sort of pewter	£ 12.00
1 pair large brass candlesticks	£ 1.16
2 pair small do.	£ 1.16
1 Coat stile	£ 5.00
1 Feather bed and 3 pillows	£ 10.00
1 Large Cotton Quilted Bed	£ 3.00
....ware consisting of pastry panns 1 pudding pann patty panns Cake panns fish kettles dripping panns and the rest and other sorts of less value	£ 12.00
Earthenware consisting of Dishes plates of several sorts, porringers, cupps, basons, large potts for holding sweetmeats and other ....necessary for use	£ 9.00
Chinaware as Cupps dishes saucers of ye value of	£ 6.00
2 very large Demijons	£ 3.12
2 Kent bottles	£ 1.04
4 Crocks 2 Muggs 2 Bear glasses, about 1 doz. Drinking glasses and several other things	£ 3.00
a large water jarr	£ 3.00
4 large jugs	£ 1.16
3 square tables with frames	£ 3.00
2/3 part of a barrel of English brandy	£ 6.00
2 dozen bottles of .....at 3' per bottle	£ 3.12
4 spitts at 6' each	£ 1.04
2 coal irons and Box Iron for Cloaths	£ 3.00
3 cases of knives	£ 0.18
1 new spinnott [spinett]	£ 15.00
2 sifters	£ 0.12
2 large cedar tubbs	£ 2.04
1 large Copper coffee pot	£ 2.04
about 40 C.... At 13' each	£ 3.00
1 small quilt bead and a large blankett	£ 1.10
1 Close stool of Bermudas cedar	£ 1.10
1 wrought Carpett for a table	£ 2.10

#### 5.1.8 The 'Tower House' Type in 1706.

During the nearly eighty years since first settlement, the British inhabitants of the Leewards had learned to build houses of no more than two stories to withstand earthquakes and hurricanes. However, as late as 1706 there was at least one extant example of the early strong house type, the Battry plantation house. In addition, Joseph Crisp Snr and John Garnett, two prominent inhabitants, had extended their houses with pavilions. The structures were only two stories high, built of timber and afforded a lookout to sea from the upper level balcony. The pavilion and tower forms were vaguely reminiscent of the pioneer period and were in keeping with English architectural styles of the time. [Figure 5.29]

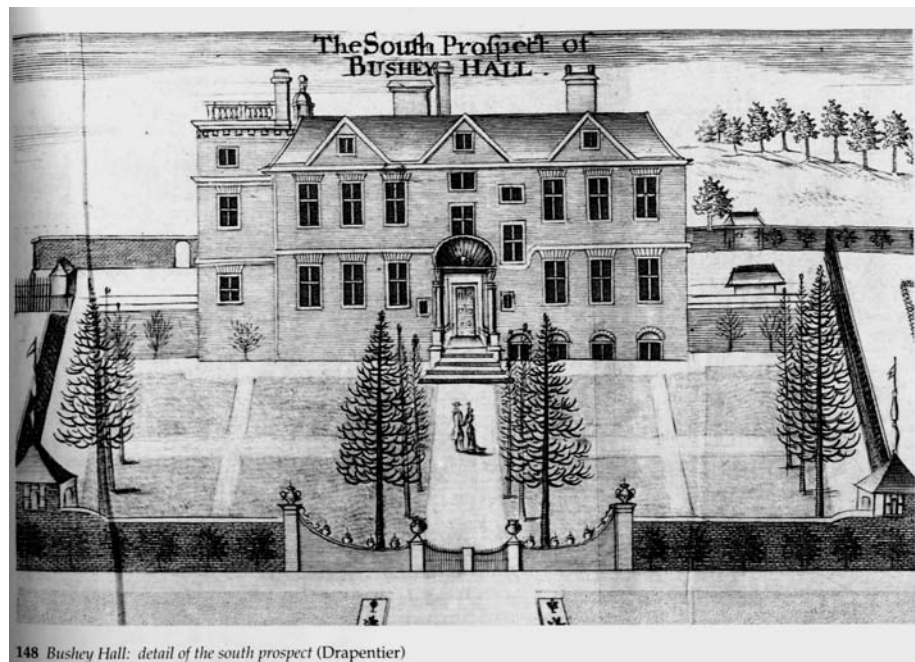


Figure 5.29. Bushey Hall, Hertfordshire. A country house of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. [Smith].

The younger generation of the family found the tower houses of the 'old inhabitant' families to be rather old-fashioned. In large part, this obsolescence was because of the haphazard manner of the extensions; by 1706, fashion and gentility required an ordered appearance. This preference was not an isolated phenomenon, for in England this was the period of the great rebuilding of the domestic architecture, when brick construction replaced heavy timber techniques and Renaissance ideals led to the symmetrical elevations of new and fashionable houses. [Figure 5. 30].



Fig.5. 30. Blickling Hall, Norfolk. Remodelled in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with a symmetrical elevation and central focus to the elevation. [Hobson].

The widow, Jone Battry, was an “old inhabitant” of the island, this according to her tombstone at Trinity Church, St. Kitts, where she was buried in August, 1706, at the age of eighty-two years. The claim submitted by Elizabeth Peter for the Battry estate amounted to £1840, which is in the upper quartile of the value of claims. The Battrys’ “large dwelling house” on the “upper plantation” was essentially a two-story keep. Over the years, the Battry family had added several sheds to the original tower house in such an unsystematic manner that Elizabeth Peters commented in disgust that they had the appearance of a rabbit warren:

1 Large Dwelling house cont. 1 hall with a Chamber above stairs 4 Closetts mastick & Yell<sup>o</sup> Sander posts very large boarded and shingled with a Rabbit warren Joyning to y<sup>e</sup> house being Stone walled round...£200.<sup>102</sup>

Peters remarked on the size of the posts, which indicates the decrease in size of available timber, and suggests the reason for the substantial value accepted for the ramshackle structure. The location on the “upper plantation” points to the requirement for security from invaders of the pioneer period and to the outlook to the sea that the tower provided. The Battry tower house had not been the sole example on the island because Lieut. Governor Hill reported burning “the couple of fortified houses....One of them being full of rum and brandy I at once set on fire” during the warfare in 1690.<sup>103</sup>

The Battry family had another house with the slightly greater value of £250 that, one presumes, was at a lower elevation. It was three-room type with a “hall and two chambers” with a 50-foot length and 16-foot width, a shingle finish and two sheds.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid. 96.

<sup>103</sup> The Hon. J.W. Fortescue, ed., *Calendar of State Papers. Colonial Series. America and West Indies. 1689-1692*. (Burlington, Ontario.: TannerRitchie Publishing & The University of St Andrews, 2004). 298. #988.

<sup>104</sup> Gillard et al. 96.

The proto-double pile house was arranged for polite society with sequential floor finishes of brick and wood, which suggests that it was new and that the custom of having both a town and country house was a recent one.

Despite the accretive appearance of the tower house, the furniture was fashionable. Between the two houses, there were a dozen “caine” chairs and two each of bedsteads, chests, franks, brass kettles, dozens of pewter plates, among other items, as well as “1 large water jar....£2”. This last item was particularly important to the owners and has a markedly higher value than the two dozen pewter plates. It was probably a large ‘Spanish clay jar’, for keeping drinking water cool, an item that appears in several inventories of the period.

The Battray’s cook room and steward room structures are further evidence that cost was not the reason for the persistence in building in timber. A claim for £20 covered the upper plantation cook room and steward room, which were “built with Stone and Lime shingled & an oven”. The larger structure of the boiling house, valued at £12, was also built in stone and was thatched. The price may have reflected the level of skill and finish to prepare the relatively small oven and its chimney.

John Garnett Esq.’s original residence in Palmetto Point was a basic ‘three room’ planter house of “48 foot long 16 foot broad Leeward Islands timber posts, Boarded one Side and End with two partitions of boards, brikt underfoot and thatched...£75”.<sup>105</sup> One infers from the value that the family built it before they had become wealthy as sugar planters and general merchants. It appears that Garnett was making improvements to the

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.28.

premises. He had nearly completed construction of a two-story painted pavilion that was to be fitted with brass hardware:

A pavilion leaning to the other house of 28 feet long 19 broad of 2 rooms of 9 foot each length with a garrett, closets and balcony all of Leeward island timber except ye rafters which was Deal not quite finished but boards---straps, locks pricey, lock---garnet hooks and hinges, paint with all other necessities for finishing the same ---at other past times...£400.<sup>106</sup>

The contents of the Garnett and Bourryau storehouse indicate the quality of items that he may have used on the pavilion. To fasten the balcony were “balcony bolts at 5’ each”; another type of bolt was of brass “with Brass nobbs”. There were small and large brass locks with [lock] boxes and staples, single spring locks and double ones, and, flat and square iron for blacksmith work.<sup>107</sup> The furniture for the house was in the latest fashion. It included “one dozen new fashion Cane chairs & couch left in Nevis newly come out [from England]” as well as the two large turned cedar frames with oval tables and “one walnutt tree oval table with a turned frame and drawers”. Also lost from the steward room were a copper coffee pot, coffee mill and the “small box of drawers of Bermudas cedar to keep spice in”.<sup>108</sup>

#### 5.18 The Buildings Of Joseph Crisp’s Plantation.

The President of St. Christopher Council, Joseph Crisp Snr, owned the most valuable residence on the island. He was an exceedingly wealthy man, had made a fortune from many activities, including sugar processing and ‘trading’ activities, and was

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.28.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. 25.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. 28.



in process of replacing the older buildings on his sugar plantation in 1706.<sup>109</sup> The main residence, valued at £1500, exceeded by £500 the value of any other structure lost in the French Raid. Scholars have mentioned the structure in several publications, but no conjecture about its appearance has been located. Crisp described the plantation buildings and contents in some detail, which gives a perspective on the trends of the architecture. The residential complex comprised a large painted two-story dwelling, the newly built guest/son's residence, the former family house, a stone kitchen, stables, "house of office" and the pigeon house.<sup>110</sup> There is no evidence about the layout of the complex.

The new residence was in the style of English country houses. [Figure 5.31] With its arched roof, the entry porch reflected cultured references; it probably was similar to Stapleton's porch in 1673 and the fort house at Pelican Point, Nevis, with column supports and open sides. [Figures 5.32 and 5.33]. For a baronial effect, it had a pavilion adjoining the house that could double as a look-out to sea or a signal tower. In keeping with the longstanding English penchant for great length in buildings, the house was the most extensive of the record with length to breadth proportions of 5:1:

a large dwelling house 90 foot long, 20 foot broad w<sup>th</sup> a back Room of 16 foot Square a porch with an arched roof 14 foot square w<sup>th</sup> a pavilion at one end 20 foot high and 20 foot Square with a Balcony of Cedar w<sup>th</sup> Boards and Shingle Rooffe over head, all ye posts in ye ground, of mastick Lignum vita Ironwood and other foreign Hard lumber with Cedar Sash winders & ye Pavillion all double Boarded Clapp Boarded and painted from topp to Bottom on ye outside and wainscotted w<sup>th</sup> fine Brass Locks on all ye doors w<sup>th</sup>out and

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<sup>109</sup> Joseph Crisp Snr. later a Councillor appointed by the Queen was, in 1686, "reputed as a great trader to the Dutch Islands, by the sugar sent there by stealth and negro slaves brought in return in the same manner, defrauding his Majesty of his Custom".["CO 153/3. Colonial Entry Book Vol XLVII.," in *The National Archives. Britain* (1681). Folio 330, 331] The smuggling was easily achieved for Crisp's largest estate was on the lightly populated, windward coast of St. Christopher ; he had a storehouse on a cove near the house in 1700.

<sup>110</sup> Gillard et al.38.

w<sup>th</sup>in, the Hall Back Roome and porch paved with Large Linden tiles all ye rest of ye Rooms floored w<sup>th</sup> Choice Boards and 2 Inch plank hardwood Sleepers, ye whole Building from one end to ye other Boarded and Shingled half with Bullet and ye other Halfe w<sup>th</sup> New England Shingles...£1500.00.0.<sup>111</sup> [Figure 5. 30]

The house was so elaborately finished and furnished that the topic requires a specific study.

The construction of the house draws attention to new features and materials. It is probable that the house had two stories because of the presence of a back room, which was a means of housing a staircase without the affecting the structural integrity of the residence. This indicates the contemporaneous English trend away from steep utilitarian stairs or ladders to elegant staircases, and eventually to the staircase in the vestibule hall of double pile houses in England starting in the 1650's. The double boarding of the pavilion and clapboarding may have been to stiffen the small free-standing structure. Other unusual attributes were the use of 'Cedarwood' and clapboards, which may have been imported, and the foreign influenced balcony, which is the second found in 1706. The coexistence of high quality finishes and the earthfast post foundation substantiates that the structural method was a characteristic of the best houses.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid. 38.

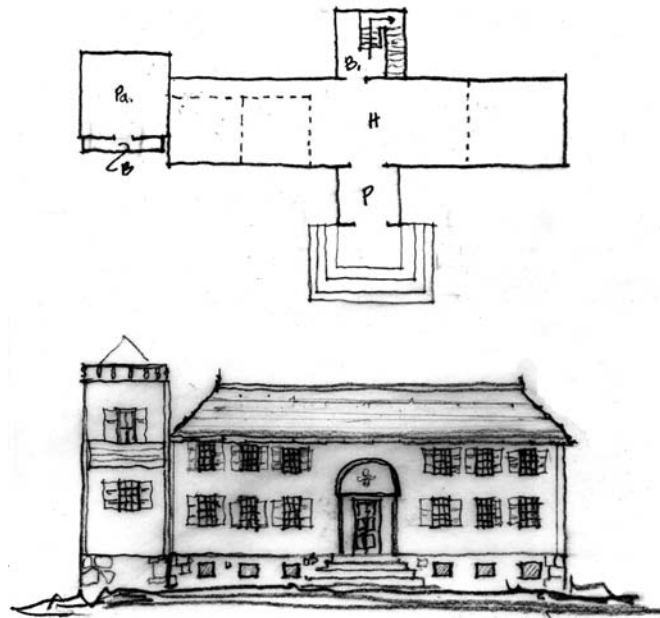


Figure 5.31. Conjectural plan and elevation of Joseph Crisp's house on St.Christopher. [Hobson].

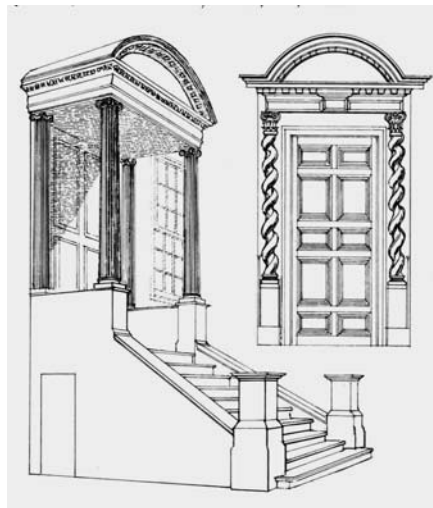


Figure 5.32. Examples of late 17<sup>th</sup> century porches with an arched roof from country houses in England. The example on the left is from Nether Lypiatt Manor, Gloucestershire, UK. [Calloway].

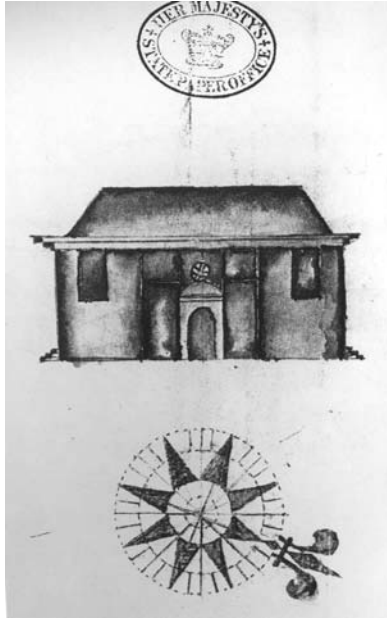


Figure 5.33. A fort house in Nevis showing an arched porch and two round ends on the building. Detail from the “Ground Plat of all Forts and Plantations in Nevis sent with Col. Johnsons’s letter of 15 September 1705” in Colonial State Papers. [National Archives of Britain.]

The majority of large claims started by listing the losses of Negro slaves and plantation goods. however, Crisp’s claim began with his house and followed on with a description of a substantial, painted outhouse. This may have been a lodging house or residence of a younger member of the family. Crisp did not mention stylistic features, but the arrangement indicates accommodation on three floors:

An outhouse newly built 50 foot long 16 broad with a loft overhead w<sup>ch</sup> Contained 4 Rooms and a Large cellar underneath with stone stairs covered with Boards and Shingled y<sup>e</sup>, whole Building plained Boards clapp boarded on y<sup>e</sup> outside and painted. Y<sup>e</sup> Roofs Boarded and shingled & paved at Bottom with Bricks and Tiles...£300.<sup>112</sup>

The kitchen, pigeon house, privy and stable were all on a scale commensurate with the owner’s status. The stone kitchen was large with dimensions of 40 feet by 20 feet, and its walls were 10 feet high. The pigeon house was elevated on a storage space

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<sup>112</sup> Gillard et al. 38.

and provided for 200 pairs of pigeons. [See Figure 5.7 (a)]. Another structure was an enormous privy or “house of office 14 feet long 16 feet broad”.<sup>113</sup> The floor had a brick surface, and the rest of the structure was a combination of stonewalls, wild cane and a thatched roof. The wooden “horse stable Capable of holding ten horses with Separate Stalls” had a groom room for the saddles, a large chest for oats and corn, as well as a loft over, possibly for living space for the grooms. It is not clear whether Crisp kept the “callash” [calèche] lined with velvet” in the stable.<sup>114</sup>

The other building complex was the sugar-processing area. The two new sugar mills stood uphill, or on a raised mill round<sup>115</sup>, of the other agricultural structures to allow for gravity feed of the cane juice to the boiling house. The *lignum vitae* and Gregory posts suggest that the mills were large covered structures. The largest structures on the plantation were the “two trash houses”, both 80 feet long and 30 feet wide, where the crushed cane stalks were stacked to dry until needed for firing the coppers. In the later eighteenth century, the trash or bagasse houses at Golden Rock, Nevis, were twenty-foot high open-sided structures, but in 1706, there is no indication of the height. The Boyling house, 80 feet by 24 feet, had a “chamber over” at one end, possibly for a night watchman, and close by was the “stillery”, or still room, a separate structure where rum was distilled from molasses. With three structures of the same length, eighty feet, it is possible that they formed three sides of a yard, near the mills.

Several smaller structures housed the multiplicity of activities, stores, Negroes and servants required on a large plantation. One of the rooms in the thatched wooden “smiths

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<sup>113</sup> A house of office was a privy or necessary house.[Lounsbury, ed. 186.]

<sup>114</sup> Calèche: a two wheeled horse drawn vehicle.

<sup>115</sup> Mill rounds are circular raised earthen areas with stone facing for rising the base level of the mills.

shop” housed the bellows, coal, iron and steel; the smith lived in the other room. There was no living space in the coopers’ shop, perhaps because a watching eye was not necessary for the cheaper materials; neither was there a similar space adjoining the “outhouse for carpenters to work in”. Several other outhouses held plantation stores, lumber and imported staves. The plantation workers were of two kinds: the enslaved Africans and European servants. The Africans had lived in “40 Negro houses...£80”<sup>116</sup> on Crisp’s plantation; most claimants did not mention this apparently inconsequential item.

The servants’ accommodation demonstrates the rapid evolution in the domestic architecture of the sugar planters from the *carbet* to houses modeled after fashionable English fashions, during eighty years. The servants lived in the former Crisp dwelling of four rooms, which had a structure of imported Caribbean hardwood and a Carib-influenced palisade perimeter. Joseph Crisp referred to the structure as a ‘longhouse’:

By 1 Long House for Servants Cont. 4 Rooms w<sup>th</sup> mastick and other Foreign Cratches wild Cained and thatcht. Our former Dwelling house w<sup>th</sup> y<sup>e</sup> house y<sup>e</sup> Col<sup>o</sup> Fox Lived in...£100.<sup>117</sup>

#### 5.1.9 Summary.

The claims in the 1707/8 Commission Report provide information on the sizes and spatial arrangements of the houses of St. Christopher. This information complements, substantiates and expands on the trends and features depicted on the maps and other visual information from the late seventeenth century.

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<sup>116</sup> Gillard et al. 38.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. 38.

There was a considerable range of construction quality and style of house in 1706, which reflected the composition and resources of the individual members of the society. About 70% of the houses were of one of the types that the colonists referred to as ‘three-room’ and ‘two-room’ houses.

The small farmers, artisans and servants lived in the ‘two-room’ house type constructed of a variety of materials; many were accretive structures with walls of different materials. This ‘hall and parlor’ arrangement was an English type commonly used in that country by modest rural workers and for small town dwellings with shops. The wealthy merchant-planters of St. Christopher developed elegant versions of the ‘two-room’ type for a business place and residence in nascent port towns. Some had started to refine the basic form by making the rooms of equal dimensions; others augmented the size of the house both horizontally, with closets, and vertically with loft rooms and even a second floor. Others were creating novel arrangements with sequential rooms. With few exceptions, the few instances of ‘shades’ or verandas mentioned in records were attached only to the merchant-planter town houses.

The typical planter dwelling was of the ‘three-room’ house type, which was a syncretism of the structural envelope of the Caribs’ *carbet* and the traditional three-room farmhouse arrangement of the British Isles. The main house was part of a complex with several detached ‘outhouses’ that housed ancillary activities. Co-existing in 1706 were the full- and half- *carbet* houses of wealthy ‘old inhabitant’ families as well as new Anglicized versions that were fashionable, gable-ended houses with a central porch entry. The most valuable planter houses had structural frames in Caribbean hardwoods, and the posts were planted several feet in the ground. In addition, the houses sat on a raised stone

basement, which accommodated the sloping nature of the land. A modest planter household used simple and locally made furniture, but prominent families imported furniture and soft furnishings in the latest style of England.

The other 30% of the houses were of widely differing types. There were a small number of single room starter houses; however, the majority were very substantial. There was in 1706, only one tower house was extant from the pioneer period on that island. Another type was the single-pile four-room house that appears to be associated with Huguenots. The co-existence of the E-plan and the proto-double pile houses illustrates the rapidity of change in the architecture. The 'Negro houses' for the slaves, when mentioned, were not of adequate consequence to warrant description.

With few exceptions, the houses were built of wood. The simplest houses had wattle or "cain'd"<sup>118</sup> enclosures similar to those of the Caribs. The quality of finish varied considerably, from houses that had rounded posts to those finished on the interior with wainscot and externally with vertical boarding, shingles and in rare cases, clapboards. The better houses sat on a stone foundation two or more feet high; in addition to keeping the floor structure dry and cool, the raised foundations accommodated the sloping sites, and, being partially above ground, provided storage space that was ventilated. It is clear that the structural use of durable tropical hardwoods was an investment and an indication of commitment to locale. [Figure 5.34].

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<sup>118</sup> 'Cain'd' or caned probably referred to material from the sugar cane plant, and wild cane may have been similar to bamboo.



**Comparison of the Values of Houses with Caribbean Hardwood and Leeward timber structure in 1706**

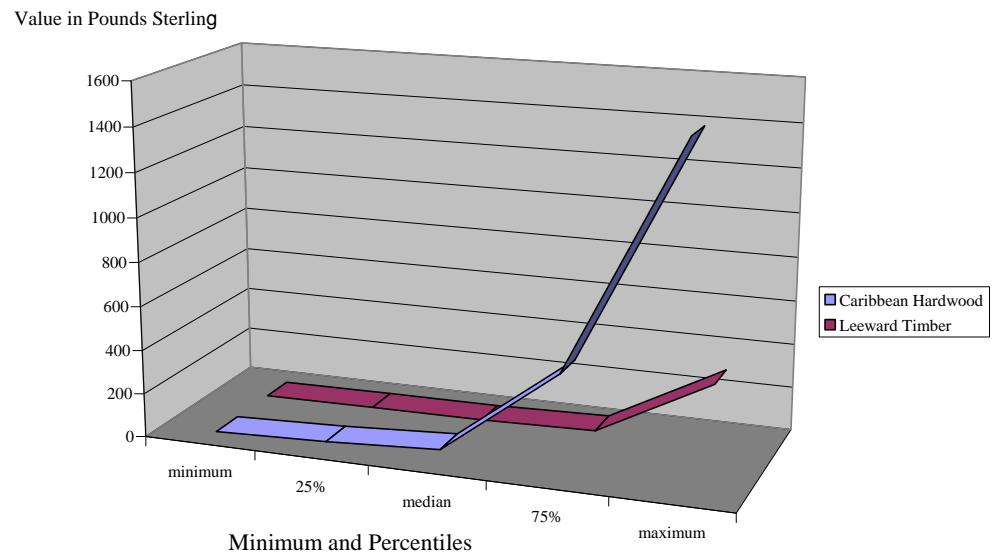


Figure 5.34. A Comparison of the values of houses with Caribbean hardwood structures and those using Leeward Island timber. [Hobson].

## 5.2 THE HOUSES IN THE FORMER FRENCH LANDS. 1726.

This section is a survey of trends in the houses built on the abandoned French lands in the twenty years after the raid of 1706. It looks at the distribution of house types and the emerging characteristics. It identifies the presence of utilitarian stone-built structures, which were not contained in the 1707/8 Report because there was minimal damage.

St. Christopher rebounded rapidly from the devastation of 1706, and by 1708, the Nevis Council reported “ye verdure of that island [St. Christopher] seems to recover its former complexion”.<sup>119</sup> The availability of farmland attracted new settlers, and inhabitants struggled to acquire the large plantations that the French had abandoned. In 1726, the British Crown appointed a Commissioner to auction the former French lands of St. Christopher. The primary source of information about the buildings in this section is the *Copy of the Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty’s Leeward Caribbean Islands in America and Gilbert Fleming and Edward Mann, Esq. For disposing of His Majesty’s Lands in the Island of St. Christopher Formerly Belonging to the French .(1726)*<sup>120</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Colonial Series. America and the West Indies. (1706-1708)* (London: HMSO).[CO 137/45 no 81].

<sup>120</sup> Under the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) the French gave up their claims to S. Christophe, but until 1726 the English Crown made no decision of the disposal of the 26,000 acres of valuable land, save to advise against long-term allocations. Nevertheless, successive governors made grants to planters and many poor people squatted in other areas. When in need of funds, George II appointed Commissioners to auction off the lands with the proviso that:

All persons whomsoever in possession of any part of His Majesty’s Lands in this island are required in 10 days to [render] to the said Commissioners a particular of each parcel of such land now in their possession...

### 5.2.1 'Two-room' houses and the proto-double pile type.

By 1726, all classes of the free populace erected two-room houses; they did so both on plantations and in the towns. However, the structures generally had an attached 'shed' or 'lean-to'; in some instances the shed ran the entire length of the structure. This movement towards the two-room deep structures, or the proto-double pile form, has complex origins. In part, it is evidence of the builders' cultural attachment or preference for English/British fashions. However, the deep form creates uncomfortable thermal conditions except where there are dormers or an upper floor with open windows. As a counterbalance to the heat was the stiffer structure, which improved the buildings' resistance to hurricanes and earthquakes.

Examination of examples from across the socio-economic spectrum indicate the widespread distribution of the proto-double pile form. Susannah Lawson and her daughter lived in a simple version of the proto-double pile on premises, which comprised "a small thatcht dwelling house of two rooms with a shed for stores, a cookroom, a Negro house".<sup>121</sup> The shingled finish of Thomas Hoskins' house marks it as a better quality structure, but the house was similar to the Lawsons', for it had two rooms and a shed:

One boarded and shingled house of 35 foot long x 15 foot wide having 2 rooms and a shed, a cisterne and a cookroome and oven.<sup>122</sup>

Charles Lowndes was in possession of an even more valuable property on thirty-three acres in Basseterre quarter, on which he had a house that was two rooms deep for its entire length:

A new dwelling house 36 foot long & 20 foot wide with Lignum vita posts, boarded and shingled and a shed the whole length",<sup>123</sup>. [Figure 5.32b]

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<sup>121</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 35.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid. 34.

Completing his premises were “a kitchen and outhouses 40 foot long framed and boarded...one small overseer’s house boarded and shingled”.

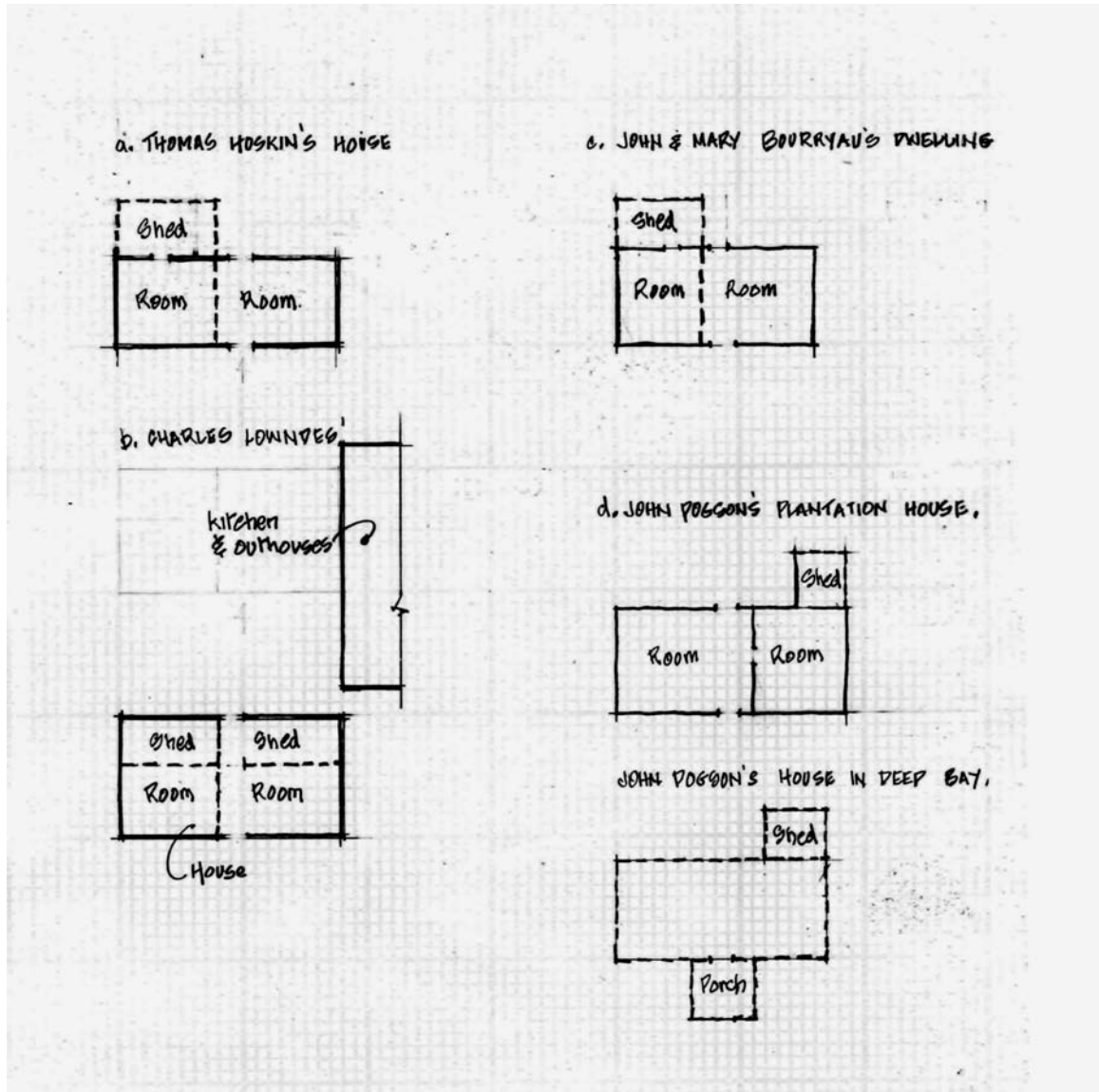


Figure 5. 35. Conjectural layouts of newly-built proto-double pile houses in 1726, St. Christopher. [Hobson].

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. 63.

Long established and prominent families, like the Bourryaus and Pogsons, also lived in the compact proto-double pile houses. It is possible that the big planters had decided to downsize after the horror of 1706, or that the houses were for an overseer, a young family member. In the case of the Bourryau house, it was to be a dower house. Nevertheless, the proto-double pile was the form they selected for both plantation and town living. For example, John Bourryau, a commissioner for the 1706 report with his wife, Mary<sup>124</sup>, had formerly owned a *carbet*-like house on his plantation. However, in 1726, they occupied a plantation of 141 acres of land with a two-room type of main house:

A house of 32 foot long, 16 foot wide with a shed adjoining thereto built all of hardwood posts and shingled built all of hardwood posts boarded and shingled.<sup>125</sup> [See Figure 5.35 (c)].

John Pogson retained the practice of owning a plantation house and a house in a port town. On his newly acquired plantation in Capesterre, he had repaired several buildings and erected a compact proto-double pile main house:

A Dwelling House of two rooms viz. a Hall of 17 foot broad and 21 foot long and a chamber of 17 and 15 foot with a small shed 8 foot square on groundsills of this mountain timber.<sup>126</sup>

The fact that the groundsills were of 'mountain timber' suggests a lack of commitment to the locale, which is probable because land tenure was fragile prior to the Commission's auction of the former French lands. One could infer that this was only a temporary structure, but he did claim a similar structure in the port town of Deep (Dieppe) Bay. The

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<sup>124</sup> St. Christopher Register," in *National Archives of St. Kitts* (Basseterre, 1727-29). Item 21 is the deed made by Mary Bourryau, widow and relict, of John Bourryau. Dated 30 January 1728/9. "St. Christopher Register," in *National Archives of St. Kitts* (Basseterre: 1727-29).

<sup>125</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 45.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. 37.

residence in Dieppe Bay, the former French port, was on a small lot of fifty by seventy feet in area, and it was “a house of two rooms, a little porch and a small shed, boarded and shingled”. [Figure 5.35 (d)].

Pogson’s porch of itself is not surprising because he belonged to a prominent family; but its presence on a modest structure is evidence of new tendencies of ‘homogenization’ of the architecture. One tendency was a lack of distinction between town and country house types. The other was the use of symbols of the gentry by modest planters. [ Figure 5.36]. In the matter of symbols, it was as if modest households were asserting their determination to hold land and to distinguish themselves from the surrounding population. Or possibly, the features of porch and pigeon house were a cultural association with Britain and its control over the abandoned lands. This approach was similar to Clement Crooke’s in 1706, having a porch on his single room house.<sup>127</sup> This use of features, signs or “cues” is a social practice in all cultures but in a vernacular setting is particularly effective, according to Amos Rapoport:

In traditional and above all, in traditional vernacular environments, not only are cues invariably noticed and understood, but the level of conformity in behavior is very high, possibly even universal.<sup>128</sup>

Daniel Burchall provides another example of the practice by aspirants to elevated status of displaying symbols of the propertied classes in that society where land was the primary source of great wealth. Burchall had two porches. In 1706, he was a clerk and lived on rented land<sup>129</sup>; by 1726, he had transitioned to living on a plantation of seventy acres in Capesterre. There he had built a “dwelling house, boarded and shingled about 40

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<sup>127</sup> Gillard et al. 87

<sup>128</sup> Amos Rapoport, "Meaning," in *Encyclopaedia of the Vernacular Architecture of the World*, ed. Paul Oliver (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press., 1997).

<sup>129</sup> Gillard et al. 110.

foot long & 16 foot broad with two small porches, a boiling house”.<sup>130</sup> Another example was the energetic John Neuth, apparently a newcomer to the planter class of the island who took over a French plantation near the town of Basseterre<sup>131</sup>. Neuth erected new wooden buildings, rehabilitated the French masonry ruins, sank a well to provide a reliable water supply, and he lined the property boundaries with cactus of the prickly pear type. His new dwelling house was a single room, with a shed, but with an enormous brick porch, possibly anticipating expansion of the house to commensurate size:

A parcel of land in his possession called Morne land....running with a prickly-pear fence....a new dwelling house of hardwood boards and shingles and 22 foot long by 16 foot wide and a shed at one end to which is added a brick porch 12 foot long by 10 foot wide, also one handsome kitchen and oven, a still house and forge with other outhouses....partly stone walls....he also has a boiling house of lime and stone very high 33 foot long by 22 foot wide, and a large underground cistern joining thereto....he is now sinking a Well already 20 odd feet deep.<sup>132</sup>



Figure 5.36. This diminutive Rose Palmer house in Gingerland, Nevis is a ‘two room’ house with a porch. (2006). [Hobson].

<sup>130</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 42.

<sup>131</sup> Note: the name Morne is a place name in former French islands for a hill overlooking the main town. In medieval English the term meant morning or dawn, which would be appropriate for this area to the east of the main town, Basseterre.

<sup>132</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 64.

The tendency to the deeper houses was apparent in the large houses of the planter class. For example, Charles Payne had acquired a property in Capesterre, where he had erected his “dwelling house [that was] 54 ft long x 28 ft wide”.<sup>133</sup> It is quite possible that Charles Payne’s large residence on his property of 221 acres in Capesterre was a fully developed double pile house.<sup>134</sup> If that was not, it may have been of the proto double pile type with a full-length shed, or, if Charles was as innovative as his father, there was a ‘shade’ along the entire main elevation. The greater probability is that it was originally a French-built house, which would account for the wide roof span.

Other features distinguish this property of the very wealthy man. For instance, the plan dimensions of the outhouses suggest a higher degree of planning and order than was evident in earlier English properties. The dimensions suggest a rectilinear arrangement of a service yard, for one outhouse was 42 feet long and 16 feet wide, and the “stable with two rooms adjoining” was 46 feet long by 16 feet wide. This is similar to the traditional layouts of French manor houses. The question arises about whether the arrangement of Payne’s property was essentially that of the earlier Huguenot owner, Roberdiau.<sup>135</sup> [Figures 5.37 and 5.38 ]. The greater probability is that, at least, the more ordered layout of the buildings reflected the general cultural and stylistic tendency to symmetry.

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid. 49.

<sup>134</sup> Note: Charles Payne was of an exceedingly wealthy and powerful family; the St. Kitts Council Minutes of 1732 indicate that he was knighted. His father was Stephen Payne, a councilor in 1706 and his son was the first Baron Lavington, Ralph Payne (1738-1807), who was twice governor-general of the Leewards.

<sup>135</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 104. Isaac Roberdiau submitted the claim for his brother’s estate.



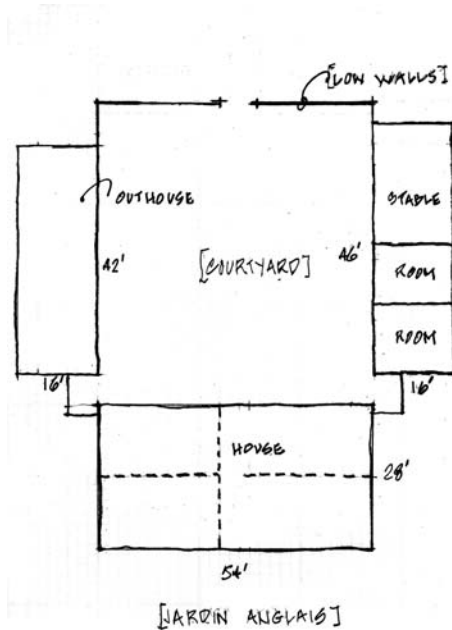


Figure 5.37. Conjectural layout of Stephen Payne's premises in Capesterre, St. Christopher, showing the double-pile house and possible courtyard arrangement. 1726. [Hobson].

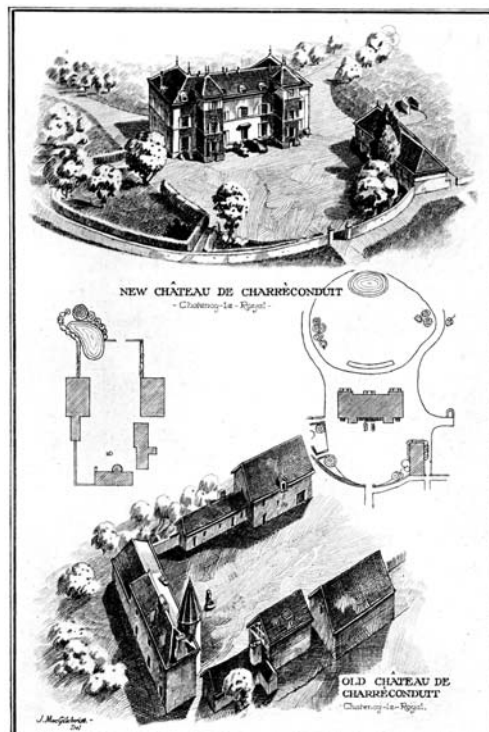


Figure 5.38. Chateau de Charréconduit, Chatenoy-le-Royal, Saone et Loire, showing an open courtyard layout and the later development of a typical French manor house. The old chateau dated from the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century; the new chateau from 1704. When the new chateau was completed, the earlier one was turned over to farming activities. [Eberlein and Ramsdell. 220].

The ordered layout and masonry residences of Charles Payne's buildings draws attention to the two French plantations in the *1726 Journal*, and points to other distinctions between the architecture of the two nations that Rochefort had referred to nearly a century earlier. These two plantations were close to the town of Basseterre, and the main house or "mansion house" on each property was a compact masonry structure of one-and-a-half or two stories in height. Both houses had plan proportions of length to breadth 1.1:1 and 5:3; these proportions differ significantly from the typical proportions of the English dwellings that were from two to five times as long as wide. These proportions are consistent with the different roof framing techniques of the French and English, which issue was raised earlier in reference to Captain Burrell's house at Wingfield Manor.

The contest between John Spooner and Robert Cunningham for the purchase of a property, and its resolution, identified one of the finest premises left by the French; the Commissioners resolved the contest by assigning it to one of themselves, Gilbert Fleming.<sup>136</sup> The two-storied masonry house on the former French plantation opened onto a courtyard surrounded by low brick and stone service areas:

A large dwelling house with an upper storey built with brick and stone and 36 feet in length and 32 feet in breadth, a kitchen and outhouse built with brick and stone likewise 36 ft. in length & 20 'in breadth & a stable built with stone of 20' in length and 14' in breadth.<sup>137</sup>

The stone and brick structure indicates the buildings' French provenance. The elegant structures did not survive the determinedly English taste of Commissioner

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 164.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. 85.

Fleming, for within a few years, he built for himself a wooden house with three gables on the site now known as ‘Shadwell’.<sup>138</sup> [Figure 5.39].



Figure 5.39. Detail of Shadwell Great House built by Solicitor-General Fleming in the second quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. [Courtesy of the St. Christopher Heritage Society].

The other former French plantation with an elegant masonry dwelling was the *Pensez y Bien*<sup>139</sup> plantation of 280 acres occupied by John Douglas Esq. He wrote that “the mansion house of the said plantation...[was] a lofted Stone dwelling house in length about 39 feet and 24 ½ feet in breadth with a porch 14 feet in length and twelve in breadth”.<sup>140</sup> One can recognize that the porch dated from the English occupation, in

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<sup>138</sup> Jacqueline Armony, Lyndon Williams, and Cicely Jacobs, "Information relating to 46 Heritage Sites on the island of St. Christopher.," in *Caribbean Cultural Heritage Inventory: Carimos* (Basseterre, St. Kitts: 2002).

<sup>139</sup> The saying ‘*pensez y bien*’ has a deeper significance than ‘wish this endeavor well’, for it connotes an activity that was put aside for a time and is being taken up again, which would refer to the return of the French following the Treaty of Ryswick 1697 and their re-starting their plantation. The sad thing is that in 1702, the French were permanently exiled from the island. Most went to Haiti.

<sup>140</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann.. 55.

similar manner to Sir Hans Sloane's Spanish houses in Jamaica. There was an order to the plan dimensions of the other buildings associated with the mansion, which suggests a courtyard arrangement:

Another outhouse 44' in length x 18 ½ in breadth, and a shed 24'x10 broad, a stable in length 26' and in breadth 14', a Coach house of the same length & 12 foot wide, a kitchen and other offices 44' in length and 18 ½ in breadth. All of which were boarded and shingled.

The sugar processing buildings were built of wood, but the roof of one of the two boiling houses was partially tiled, and the other half was thatched. If the French origin of *Pensez y Bien* were not known, the tiled roofing of the boiling house would have been evidence of its derivation. [Figure 5.40]

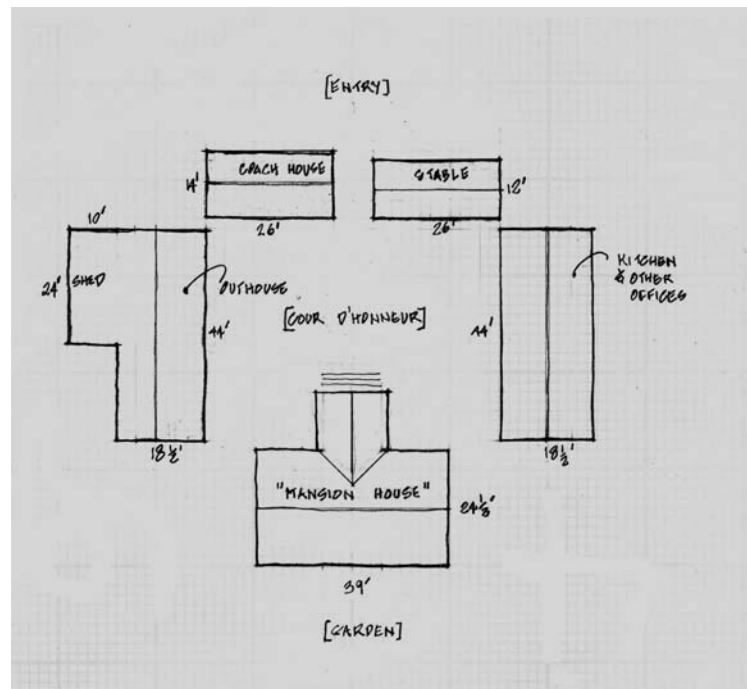


Figure 5.40. Conjectural layout of the Pensez Y Bien plantation, St. Christopher's. 1726. [Hobson]

### 5.2.2 The single-pile house type.

The three-room planter house type survived the French raid in its basic plan form. Where information is available, it appears that the length of these houses was close to three times the width. This suggests that expansion upwards with lofts and second floors, rather than sheds, accommodated increases in spatial needs. The house form was ideally suited to the tropical maritime climate, where the absence of sheds permitted cross-ventilation and cooling of the houses. This house type was common in the former French town of Basseterre, and there is the question whether this was a French survival. Among the houses of this type in the countryside, there is similar evidence of the adoption of gentry symbols, porches and pigeon houses, by modest householders.

The Howe's premises, or messuage, on a large lot in Basseterre town combined a business place, residence, walled garden and service yard area. The spaces of the three-room house conformed to the functional arrangement of work, hall and chamber. Francis Finch reported on behalf of her nephew, Henry Howe, that John Galloway rented the premises at £30 per annum and kept a shop in the single pile house:

A house of three rooms (viz.) an hall about 16' in breadth and twenty foot in length, one chamber of 16' square and a shop of 16' x 12, also a Cookroom, a small stable and privy house...72' in front and 162 feet backwards to the Gutt; all which with a garden spot were well enclosed with a dry stone wall.<sup>141</sup>

There is no indication about the orientation of the house on the site. Reference to the layout of later eighteenth-century houses in Basseterre suggests that if the house presented its short end to the street, where the shop was located, the chamber would have enjoyed great privacy. In addition, the house could have been used to divide the site into

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid. 94

the service area with cook room, privy and stable, with the garden spot on the other side. [See Figure 5.28]. There were also houses of four rooms in the town. For instance, there was Thomas Dinzey's substantial house on half an acre of waterfront land, with a cook room and out houses.<sup>142</sup> At this period, the town lots were of considerable size, and included the main house, stables, kitchens and outhouses; they may not have needed the longitudinal arrangement to distinguish between zones.

Several middling planters built plantation houses in the traditional arrangement with Caribbean hardwood posts, but in a conservative way without any tendency to extension. An example is the Theodore Vanderburgh Georges estate of eighty-eight acres near the old French fort.<sup>143</sup> Georges had recently constructed a huge shingled, pigeon house, which was 10 feet square in plan, with *lignum vitae* posts. In addition to this symbol of the landowning class, he wrote that his house had a hall, four chambers, and a structural frame of *lignum vitae* posts. The dwelling was 52 foot long by 18 foot wide, which connotes the planter-type of three-room house, but may have had a loft to accommodate the fourth chamber. Georges stated that the floors of the chambers were wooden, but that the Hall "was not floored", which implies that he was planning to pave the floor with imported Bristol stone or tiles in the traditional way. He also mentioned several other structures on his property including the large kitchen building, storehouses and a boiling house, which was partially of stone.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid.23.

<sup>143</sup> The heirs of Samuel Georges held a plantation near Sandy Point with a house of three large rooms and a kitchen, according to the attorney Phillip LaCousay in 1706; it is possible that Theodore Georges was resuscitating that property.

<sup>144</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 47.

George Taylor was another middling sugar planter; his plantation in Basseterre quarter was burnt in 1706. His statements about the rebuilding on his holding of 100 acres in Basseterre conjures up images of feudal times, for he claimed to have settled three [European] families on his estate, gratis. His dwelling was a three-room planter house with a porch; the structure had “hard posts” and a shingled exterior; it was 48 feet long with a substantial porch 12 feet square. He also referred to Nicholas Gallway’s nearby estate of 86 acres, on which stood a dwelling of similar appearance being “one boarded and shingled dwelling house 50’ in length and 16 wide there being three rooms and a porch”<sup>145</sup>.

The attention to symbolic practices is evident in the bid by the very insecure James Maillard. The Huguenot and his parents had not been naturalized English, like Thanvett, and after fleeing the island in 1706, had not returned before Christmas Day of 1711<sup>146</sup>. Maillard was attempting to expand his family’s land in Capesterre by taking possession of bordering lands.<sup>147</sup> In order to stem the outward migration, the terms of the 1726 Commission specifically addressed the acquisition of land by persons like Maillard, and technically granted them equality with the English:

Some French Protestant families, who chose to remain in their settlements and become subjects to the Crown of Great Britain and thereupon obtain patents to their lands in Fee and there are some who have not taken out

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid. 68.

<sup>146</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies. August 1714 - December 1715*, vol. 28 (London: H.M.S.O., 1928). August 1714 #74 iv. [CO 152, 10 #33, 33i-vii.].

<sup>147</sup> The land under consideration was, using James Maillard’s words, bordered by those of Mary and Phillip Maillard, who were Huguenots. Their lands were deep in the former French quarter for they ran with lands formerly owned by French persons. Whether Phillip died in 1726 is not clear for in her claim Mary Maillard stated that she was a widow; she pointed out that she and her husband were Huguenots who had suffered much for their religion.

patents who have held and some hope to hold their plantations on the equity of the like pretensions<sup>148</sup>.

It is significant that Maillard, who was not naturalized, had erected a house with a porch that was indistinguishable from English ones. It was “one dwelling house 48 foot long by 16 foot wide with a porch 10 foot long and 8 foot wide, boarded and shingled”.<sup>149</sup> Clearly, he was attempting to ‘cloak’ himself with cultural symbols as a statement of loyalty to the British Crown.

The customary and genteel practice of having hard floor surfaces in the hall and wooden floors in private areas persisted. John Orton, a newcomer to the island, had a modest plantation of only sixty-nine acres in the former French quarter. His dwelling house was only 40 feet long and 16 feet wide, boarded and shingled, but he mentioned the Bristol stone paving in one of the rooms, and board flooring in the other.<sup>150</sup>

The details of Joseph King’s property indicate an attention to gardens and the use of low stonewalls that was not evident in the *1707/8 Report*. It is probable that King lived on an abandoned English plantation in Trinity, Palmetto Point. At just over twenty-nine acres, the property was modest, but King had already declared his aspirations by erecting a 12-foot high, 6 ½-foot square, pigeon house pavilion on posts. The residence was a planter-type house, and King used the traditional terminology of hall and chambers to describe the house that opened onto a walled yard:

A dwelling house of hard posts boarded and shingled in length 48 foot and 14½ in breadth having a chamber boarded underfoot another and the hall paved with brick the yard fronting 70 foot in length and 24 foot broad walled and pailed in.”<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. Folio 12. Note: whether their claims were successful is another matter.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. 42

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. 47

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. 60.



The walled garden was fashionable and similar to those of English gentry houses of the seventeenth century and supports the ephemeral evidence of the colonists' delight in walled gardens. [See Figure 5. 29].

### 5.23 Utilitarian Structures.

Complementing the wooden houses was a range of low, masonry structures for storage, food preparation and the storing of fresh water. In 1706, there was little information available about the cooking arrangements intermediate between those with large kitchen buildings and families with a pair of baking stones<sup>152</sup>. Few claimants spoke about freestanding ovens, cisterns, garden walls and other utilitarian structures built of stone because these rustic items were not damaged by fire.

Baking stones on an open fire may have been adequate for baking small quantities of cassava cakes, similar to the Irish way of baking oatcakes<sup>153</sup>, but there was a growing market for the foodstuff to feed the Negro slaves. The stone oven played a role that was intermediate between the planters' kitchens and the baking stones; the ovens were freestanding outdoor structures built of stone or brick and were probably the antecedent of the stone ovens of the Leewards. [Figure 5.41]. The people of Irish Town near Basseterre Town, which was settled under the French by runaway Irish Catholic servants, had modest establishments similar to Mary East's, on one-third of an acre. She owned two thatched houses, which were served by "one oven together with one olde

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<sup>152</sup> Gillard et al.

<sup>153</sup> Estyn Evans, *Irish Heritage. The landscape the people and their work* (Dundalk: W. Tempest, Dundalgan Press, 1967).

cisterne”<sup>154</sup>. Margaret Radcliffe lived on five-acres in Basseterre quarter in a substantial wooden dwelling house 40 foot long by 16 ½ foot wide; Radcliffe made certain to mention the presence of an oven.<sup>155</sup> Thomas Hoskins spoke of similar structures, as did Nathaniel Whale, of Irish Town, who lived on just under a half acre in a modest wooden house 26 feet long; they both had an oven separate from the cook room.<sup>156</sup>

A large kitchen was a status symbol, and its most significant feature was the gabled hearth wall of stone. In grand establishments, the other walls were of stone or timber; in poor households, the walls were generally of inferior and combustible material. When the mason and farmer, John Parks, described his property, he hinted at the social significance of the kitchen. Parks devoted nearly as much time to describing his “small”, wooden, thatched house of two rooms, each twelve by fifteen feet, as to his “a small cookroom with a backwall and oven”.<sup>157</sup> Parks grew cotton, indigo, yams, cassava and potatoes for the local market on a ten-acre shared lot. The independent blacksmith, Hugh Carty, spoke in the same manner about “one boarded and shingled cookroom with one oven and stone wall.”<sup>158</sup> Similarly, Adam Tiers recounted that his kitchen had “a stone gable and oven therein and steward room at the end of it, both boarded.”<sup>159</sup>

The typical cooking arrangements of St. Christopher had several mutually reinforcing European precedents. The gable-end fireplace, according to Fred Kniffen, was an English tradition brought to the Americas and associated with the baking of bread

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<sup>154</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 74.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. 78.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid. 24.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid. 23.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. 33.

from flour.<sup>160</sup> In the Leewards, the kitchen structure was detached from the residence for social and practical reasons, but remained an essential part of the premises. The lesser structures, the outdoor free-standing ovens of clay, stone and brick are found in many cultures, but not among the Irish; however, the residents of Irish Town adopted them. These ovens may be of English derivation, for a Dr. Plot wrote, prior to 1686, about the stone and brick ovens of Staffordshire that were located at a distance from the houses<sup>161</sup>; a practice which was introduced to seventeenth century Jamestown, Virginia, for use in hot weather.



Figure 5.41. A free-standing stone oven in the Leeward Islands, circa 1970.  
[Courtesy of the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society].

<sup>160</sup> Fred B. Kniffen, "The Outdoor Oven in Louisiana," *Louisiana History* 1, no. 1 (1960). 27.

<sup>161</sup> Worth Bailey, "A Jamestown Baking Oven of the Seventeenth Century," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*. 2nd Ser. 17, no. 4 (1937). 497-8

Even modest persons, like James Aiken, in 1726 had the essential domestic stone structures, oven, cistern and foundation wall, on his tenth-of-an-acre site. Aiken described his lot, and “the improvements thereon are a boarded and shingled house 40 foot by 16 foot wide and a cellar, cistern and oven”<sup>162</sup>. In Basseterre, it appears that some of the cisterns for storage of potable rainwater were rectangular, and similar to those for which there are dimensions. The cisterns were between 8 and 9 feet deep, and 7 and 9 foot square in plan. One assumes stone construction. Hugh Carty, the blacksmith, was proud that he had built his cistern “from the foundation, eight foot deep and nine foot square.”<sup>163</sup> James Goffe claimed that his cistern was 9 foot deep and 7 foot square<sup>164</sup>. John Neuth may have repaired a large French built cistern at the Morne, for it was underground and part of a complex with a ‘handsome kitchen and oven’, forge and outhouses.

#### 5.2.4. Summary

The architectural trends in the houses on the former French lands continued the earlier trend towards ‘Anglicization’ of the tropical colony. Indeed, the colonists employed traditional symbols of property-ownership and English culture to emphasize their loyalty and identity as part of that society.

The English two-room house type was in general use by all sectors of the free population; it appeared in both the country and town as the accommodation of wealthy planter families and poor town dwellers. The record indicates that the single-storied

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<sup>162</sup> Matthew, Fleming, and Mann. 52.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. 23.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. 35

version with a shed, a proto-double pile arrangement was ubiquitous, but there were two-room-deep houses. Unlike owners of the earlier period, modest house-owners erected entry porches. The major differences between the houses of the different classes were the size and the construction materials. Generally, the planters' houses had Caribbean hardwood structures with local and North American shingle finishes.

Several planters rebuilt using the single-pile 'three-room' house type, but in addition three and four-room single pile houses were found in and around the former French towns of Basseterre and Dieppe Bay. Several of the modest planter houses had entry porches and pigeon houses; others had Anglicized French structures by the addition of an entry porch. To complement the wooden houses was a range of low, masonry structures like garden walls, freestanding ovens for baking and cisterns for the storing of fresh water.

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## **CHAPTER 6 –THE ‘LARGE HOUSES’ OF ANTIGUA AND NEVIS. 1686-1722.**

The records of the residences of the wealthiest families in Antigua and Nevis during the period 1686-1722 substantiate and expand on the findings about house types and the expressions of culture on St. Christopher and Montserrat. [See Chapters 4 and 5]. The sources of this information are diverse. They include archaeological reports as well as personal and business correspondence, Council minutes, maps, accounts, probate inventories and three of the surviving Claims from Nevis following the French Raid in 1706. In a few cases, there are multiple inventories or descriptions of the same house.

### **6.1 BETTIES’ HOPE, ANTIGUA.**

Affluent property owners in Antigua erected stone houses in the early days of settlement and continued this practice into the eighteenth century. One example is Colonel Strobe’s ‘Dover Castle’, which drew considerable admiration from Sir Charles Wheeler in the 1670’s,. A series of governors owned ‘Betties’ Hope’ plantation between the 1650’s and 1726; the location of the house and compound on the crest of a hill allowed the occupants to benefit from cooling breezes and to enjoy a commanding view over the surrounding landscape.<sup>1</sup> In the 1650’s Governor Christopher Keynell named the plantation after women in his family; unfortunately, the Island Assembly confiscated the

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<sup>1</sup> The location of the house and compound is apparent on the site.



property after his widow fled to Nevis from the French Raid of 1666. Future research may reveal whether 'Betties' Hope' was the plantation house defended by a palisade that the French attacked in 1666 according to du Tertre:

A large stone house on a hill, defended by a strong and extensive palisade the extremities of which terminated at a great wood...This mansion and its surrounding buildings well built of dressed stone and roofed with tiles as were also the mills, the sugar house and the storehouses full of sugar and tobacco.<sup>2</sup>

Christopher Codrington II, a Barbadian planter, obtained a grant for the plantation in 1674.<sup>3</sup> He started to rebuild the plantation buildings in stone, but while he was engaged in the recapture of St. Christopher in 1689/90, an earthquake seriously damaged his efforts:

There was a terrible earthquake, which laid some of our buildings in rubbish and killed some persons. Scarce any stonework in these islands has escaped damage and I myself am a loser to the value of £2,000. The great earthquake was on Sunday, 5 April between 4 and 5 o'clock in the afternoon; for a month afterwards we had almost daily shakes, and even now there passes not a week without some tremblings."<sup>4</sup>

The next owner was his son, Christopher Codrington III, who, after permanently expelling the French from St. Christopher in 1702, lost his post as Governor-General, became a recluse and retired to Barbados, where he died in 1710.

The 1710 survey map of the property suggests that during Codrington's illness Betties' Hope had become somewhat dilapidated. Nevertheless, the map displays early

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<sup>2</sup> Vere Langford Oliver, "The History of the Island of Antigua - One of the Leeward Caribbees in the West Indies - from the first settlement in 1635 to the present. Volume 1," (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 140 Wardour Street W, 1894). 44.

<sup>3</sup> This was a part of William, Lord Willoughby's effort to re-establish the colony and assist Charles II's Royalist supporters to recoup their losses from the Civil War. [Foundation Devonian, ed., *Extracts from the Codrington Papers pertaining to the family archives with its plantations in Antigua and other islands in the West Indies during the period 1649-1924*. (Calgary, Canada: 1988).]

<sup>4</sup> The Hon. J.W. Fortescue, ed., *Calendar of State Papers. Colonial Series. America and West Indies. 1689-1692*. (Burlington, Ontario: TannerRitchie Publishing & The University of St Andrews, 2004). p.278 #927.

evidence of a Baroque influence on the landscape with a tree-lined “Tamerin Walk” [N] leading to “the Garden” [O] and pathways converging on the buildings and major structures on the crest of the hill.<sup>5</sup> [Figure 6.1] In a more traditional manner, low walls enclosed “Betties’ Hope House” [A] on three sides. [Figure 6.2] Two small buildings called “flankers” guarded the open fourth side of the main compound, and a third flanker faced the windmills.<sup>6</sup> From the house, one accessed the kitchen [F] through an archway leading to the kitchen yard, in which cows were penned, perhaps for milking. The large stable, appropriate for an affluent planter, straddled the wall to the kitchen yard. The third walled enclosure, which one may expect to be a garden, was then used as a “cattle pen” [D].

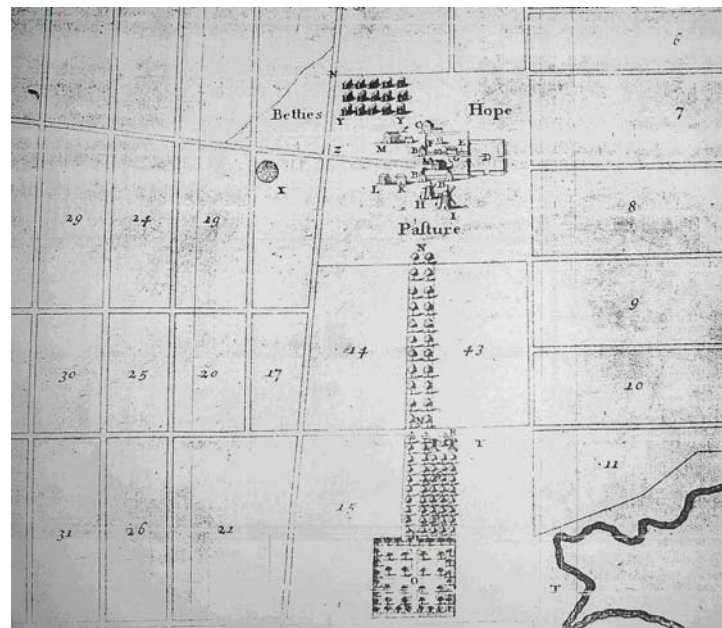


Figure 6.1. Detail of the 1710 survey map of ‘Betties’ Hope’ plantation showing the pathways converging on the main compound and the tree lined “Tamerin Walk” leading to “the Garden”. [Extracts from the *Codrington Papers Pertaining to the Family Archives with Its Plantation in Antigua and Other Islands During the Period 1649-1924*. Museum of Antigua and Barbuda].

<sup>5</sup>The 1710 layout most likely owes its Baroque character to the well-educated Christopher III, a Fellow of All Souls’, Oxford, and associate of socialites in England like Colen Campbell. [ Vincent T. Harlow, *Christopher Codrington (1668-1710)*, Reprint ed. (Bridgetown, Barbados: The Codrington Trust, 1990). Chapter V.]

<sup>6</sup> Devonian, ed. Map O. Survey of Bettys’ Hope and Cotton Plantation circa 1710.

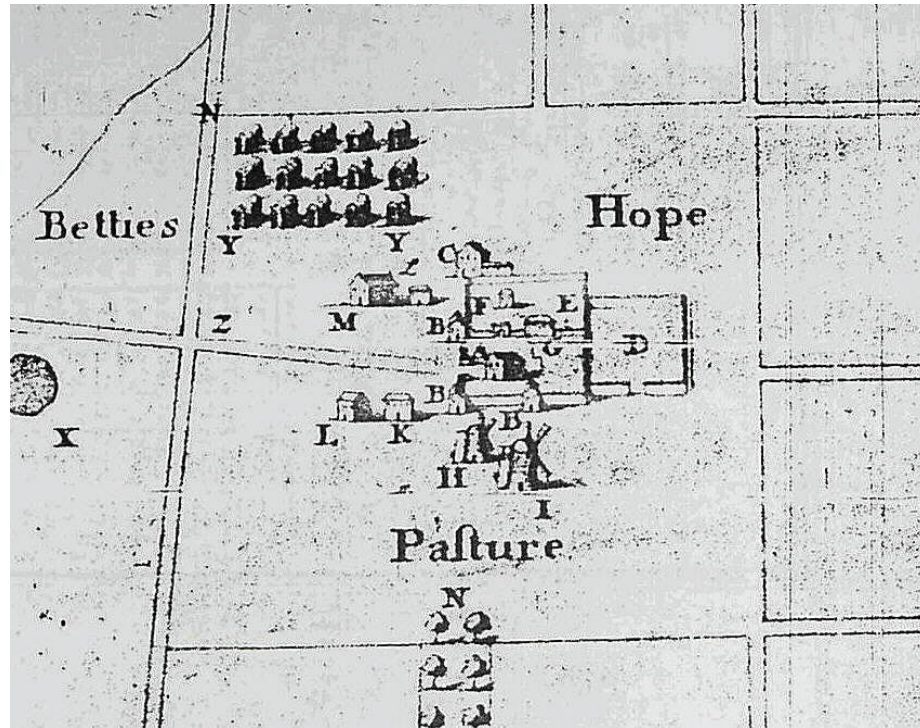


Figure 6.2 Detail of the residential compound on the 1710 survey map of 'Betties' Hope' plantation. [Extracts from the Codrington Papers Pertaining to the Family Archives with Its Plantation in Antigua and Other Islands During the Period 1649-1924. Museum of Antigua and Barbuda].

The sense of order imposed by the walled enclosures did not extend to the layout of the windmills, the boiling house or other sugar processing structures. The fifteen "Negro Houses" [Y] that stood downhill at a short distance from the walled enclosures were laid out in three neat rows; this rectilinear arrangement is a stark contrast to the randomly located processing buildings and indicates the imposition of control. There is no evidence of the West African arrangement of family compounds. The Negro houses appear to have arched or rounded roofs, and the entry is on the short side of the structure. It is quite possible that these structures are later versions of the Negro houses described by du Tertre:

Des Cases des Nègres...n'ont guères plus de neuf à dix pieds de longueur sur six de large, & dix ou douze de haut; elles sont composées de quatre fources qui en font les quatres coins, et de deux autres plus eslevès qui appuyent la

couverture qui n'est que de Roseaux, que la pluspart font descendre jusqu'à un pied de terre.<sup>7</sup>

[The small houses of the Negroes...scarcely more than nine or ten feet long by six wide, and ten or twelve high; they were built of four forked posts at the four corners, and of two other longer ones which held up the roofing that was only reeds, so that most of the reeds hang to just a foot above the ground.]

By 1755, the house, then known as the 'Buff',<sup>8</sup> was the focal point of a Baroque landscape with a tree-lined walk extending into the distance. [Figure 6.3] The residential walled compound was fully enclosed and had an ordered and baronial appearance with four corner turrets, possibly developed from the "flankers" of 1710. [Figure 6.4] The very terminology of the surveyor's description of the compound suggests references to some class of castle:

The dwelling house which is enclosed by a Wall in form of a parallelogram with a turret or Room at each corner, one (f) being used as a Doctor's Room, another (g) for the bookkeeper, another (h) for the overseer and the other (i) for a tradesman.<sup>9</sup>

The existence of similar layouts in fortified houses or tower houses in other former British colonies, for example, Jamaica and Georgia, suggests that the 'tower house' tradition persisted well into the eighteenth century. [See Figure 2.8]. There were no references to an *enceinte*, or enclosing wall, apart from palisades at the fortified residences previously mentioned in the Leewards. The evidence at 'Betties' Hope'

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<sup>7</sup> Jean-Baptiste du Tertre de l'Ordre des FF. Precheurs *Histoire generale des Antilles habitee par les Francois.*, Reedition executee d'apres l'edition de Th. Jolly de 1667-71 ed., 4 vols. (Fort de France, Martinique: Editions des Horizons Caraibes., 1973). 482.

<sup>8</sup> The name of the house was a corruption of the word 'bluff'. [Interpretative material at the Visitors Centre, Betty's Hope, Antigua.]

<sup>9</sup> Samuel Clapham, "Map of the Estate of Wm. Codrington of Antigua surveyed 1755, Betty's Hope, the Cotton, Cotton New Work, the Garden, the Tufts," (St. Johns, Antigua.: National Archives of Antigua., 1755).

suggests that they may have existed as a version of the walled garden practices of the period.<sup>10</sup>

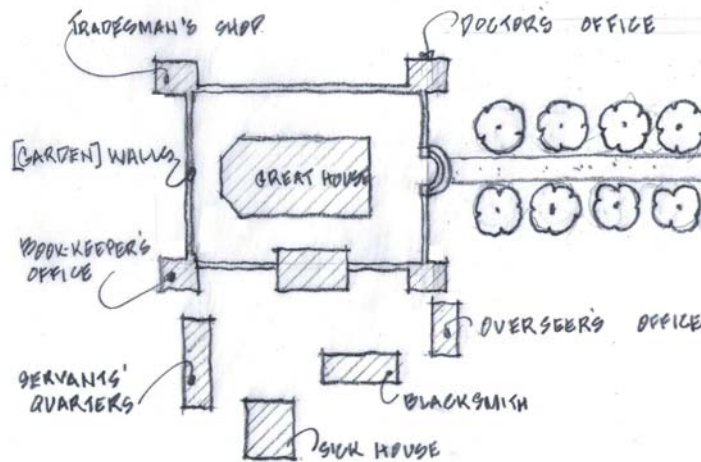


Figure 6.3. Sketch of the layout of Bettys' Hope residential compound in 1755 from the map at the Betty's Hope Interpretive Centre, Antigua. This is the arrangement of the survey map of 1755 by Samuel Clapham. [Hobson].

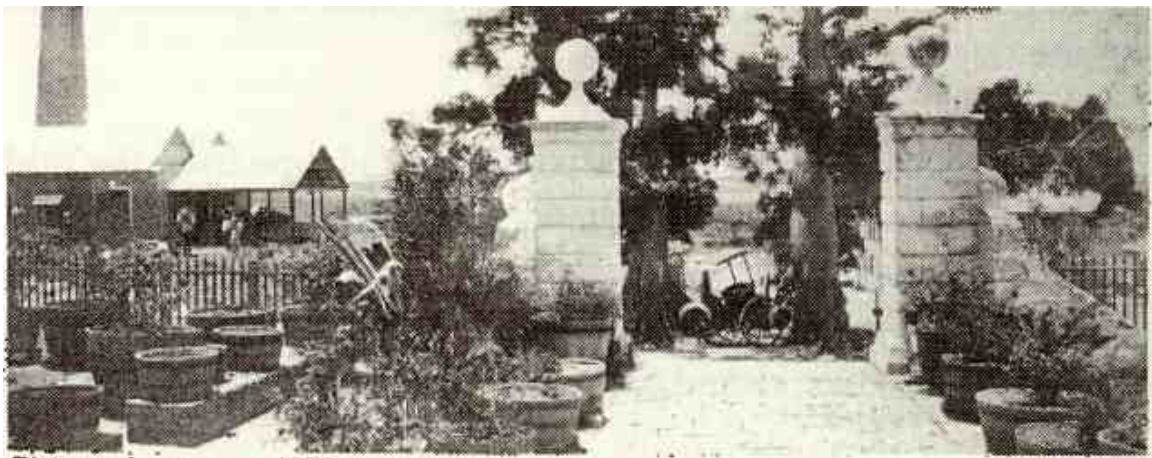


Figure 6.4. The gateposts of the 'Buff' at Betty's Hope, Antigua, looking towards the sugar works, ca. 1860. The dressed stone gateposts with the ball on top are a feature of 18<sup>th</sup> century in the Leeward Islands. [Website of Betty's Hope Trust. <http://www.antiguamuseums.org/bettyshope.htm>]

<sup>10</sup> Most of the existing large ruins at Betty's Hope date from a late 18<sup>th</sup> century re-building under another Codrington. The USA forces demolished the remains of the residence and curtain walls during World War II to construct a military base.

## 6.2 THE LARGE HOUSES AND MANSIONS OF NEVIS. 1696-1722.

Because no enemy forces had invaded the island since the Spanish attack of 1629, until the French Raid of 1706, Nevis was “the garden of the Leewards”.<sup>11</sup> It was the refuge for other Leeward Islanders threatened by the French and was heavily populated up to 1706. The island was a depot of the Royal African Adventurers from the late 1660’s until the Company lost its monopoly in 1698<sup>12</sup>, and several company members and agents owned properties on the island. The Society of Bristol Merchants, also involved in the Africa trade, had a particular interest in the island as is evident from the names of Somerset and Gloucestershire families, such as Westbury and Brome, that recur in the records.

### 6.2.1 Charlot’s. 1696-1706.

Another of the plantation houses on Nevis was Charlot’s, first owned by Henri Charlot/Charloss, who was evidently a cultured and educated man; he enjoyed books and expended considerable sums to maintain them. Nevertheless, for at least ten years before he died in 1695 or 1696, he had been a sugar planter and lived on a 112-acre property<sup>13</sup> in a low-lying area near Charlestown. Subsequently, Azariah Pinney, William Slade and Thomas Morry became the owners.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies*, vol. 23 (London: H.M.S.O.). 179-184. [CO 137/45 no 81].

<sup>12</sup> T.C.S. Machling, "Protected Interests? The fortifications of Nevis, West Indies, from the 17th century to the present day." (PhD, University of Southampton, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> Jeffrey Merriweather, "Fragment of notes of Jeffrey Merriweather to Azariah Pinney of their losses in the French Raid of 1706.," in *Pinney Family Papers. Bristol University Library* (Bristol: 1708). In addition there is a receipt dated 1685 for his purchase of 5 coppers, a mill and other accoutrements for sugar working.

<sup>14</sup> William Slade, "Release from William Slade of the Island of Nevis of one certaine plantation called Charlott's..." in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol, UK: Special Collections, Bristol University Library, 1718).

The house was “of two rooms below and above boarded, shingled and good timber” and was valued at £250 when damaged or destroyed in 1706.<sup>15</sup> This two-room type house was not typical of plantation houses; one explanation may be the location of Charlot’s near the town or of new currents in houses. A house of this value probably had a stone foundation of two or three feet height depending on the site. Despite the three surviving inventories of the house taken between 1696 and 1706, there is little information about the structure and dimensions, which suggests that it was not remarkably different from the norm. [Figure 6.5].

The inventories of the house indicate the arrangement and living practices of the household. The furniture in Charlot’s Probate inventory of 1696 indicates that the two rooms upstairs were a formal chamber and a bedchamber and that on the lower level were a study or withdrawing room and a hall or multi-use room for meals and reception.<sup>16</sup> [Table 6.1] It appears that in Charlot’s study or library were “a large chest of books’, a ‘screto’ or writing desk<sup>17</sup> that was “full of papers” and a “glass case”. The glass case was probably a bookcase, and if that was the case, it was an early example of the furniture type because Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) was credited with designing the first glazed

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<sup>15</sup> Thos. Cottgrave and Jeffrey Merriweather, "Losses sustained by Azariah Pinney late of the Parish of St. Pauls in the aforesaid island, but now of London, merchant. Given in by Thos. Cottgrave & Jeffrey Merriweather attorneys to the said Pinney is as followeth -," in *Pinney Family Papers. Bristol University Library*. (Bristol: 1707).

<sup>16</sup> unknown, "Nevis. A list of moveables upon the estate of Mr. Henry Charloss. This 19 May 1696. Inventory of goods, negroes and cattle. Charlotts Estate.," in *Pinney Family Papers. Bristol University Library* (Bristol: 1696).

<sup>17</sup> Scrutore may be ‘scrutoire’ - a variation of ‘escritoire’ or small desk. 1628. [G.W.S. Friedrichsen, ed., *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on historical principles.*, Third ed., 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press; Clarendon Press, 1973; reprint, Revised).]



bookcase.<sup>18</sup> These items, along with some chairs, furnished Charlot's study or library.  
[Figure 6.6a].

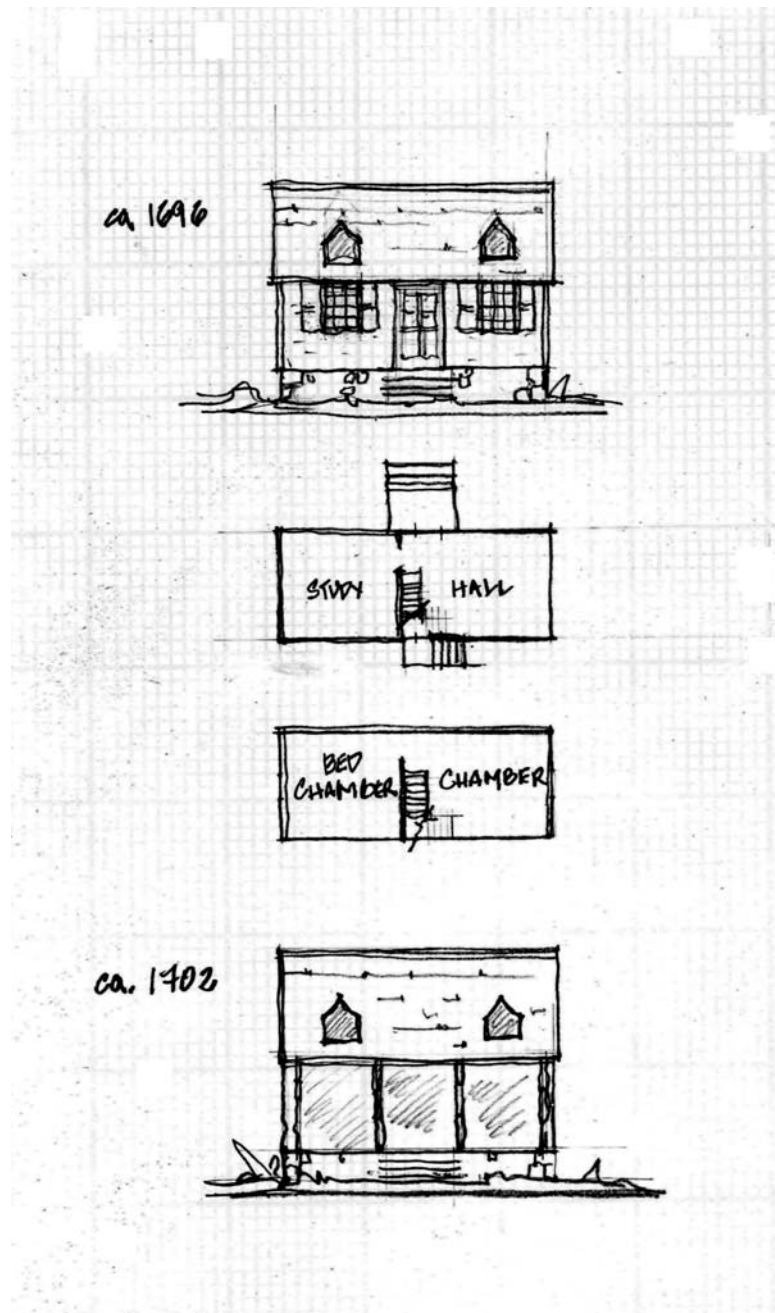


Figure 6.5. Conjectural plans and elevations of the house at Charlot's in 1696 and 1702. [Hobson].  
The basis for this reconstruction is that room spans were no greater than 20 feet; two room houses were between twice and three times as long as wide; wall-plate height of 7 foot; a house built in the 1680's was probably 1 ½ and not 2 stories high .

<sup>18</sup> Edward Lucie-Smith, *Furniture: A Concise History* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1979). 86.



**Table 6.1 Partial Transcript of Excerpts from A List of Moveables upon the estate of Mr. Henry Charless.  
This 19 May 1696.**

Inventory of goods, negroes and cattle. Charlotts Estate.

Negromen, Negro women, Negro children, cattle.....

Five coppers; two copper coolers; three skimmers; three old ladles; a Still worm & xxx; a xxxbrass kettle;  
three iron potts; one frying pan; one chafing dish; one brass skillet; one Baking fsono (stone?);  
xxx two axes; three padlocks; one new fsorks (stock?) lock; one old stock lock.

A pair of xxx (swords); one silver hillrod fwocks ( silver hilted sword ?); xxx; one small bedstod;  
one bed filled with silk cotton; one large cedar chest; one large chest full of books; one chest of drawers;  
one large cupboard; eight old lanthorn[leather] chairs; four old chairs; three jugs; two large buckets;  
six pales; one wooden funnill; one tin funnills; one small pair of stilides; a screto full of papers; a table;  
a gallon pot & a quart pot of pewter; a pint pot tin; a looking glass; a glass case; a wooden bowl;  
a lomonaidor cup or blow [blue] jugg; two ladles; one old side saddle; one pair bollows [bellows];  
one pair of spoons; three table clothes; eight napkins; three towels; one hamaker.

One pott of butter; one barril of flour; beef etc; half a barrel of pork; four dishes; two basons;  
seven plates; one dozen of spoons; one case of knives; 4 boxes iron basons; two brass candlesticks;  
fifteen old hoods; two pickling forks.

[Note: the sheet was divided by lines into the sections shown above.]

The second room downstairs was a hall, which contained the eight leather chairs, lined up against the wall in the fashionable way of that time, the table and a looking glass. [Figure 6.6b] In addition, there was a “large cupboard”, which was generally for display of the best tableware, but there was no pewter or china on the inventory. Charlot’s widow Ruth was no longer in Nevis, she had left for Boston after Charlot’s passing<sup>19</sup>; she may have removed the best linen and tableware. Thus, it appears that the other listed items such as a pair of dueling swords, the stilliards<sup>20</sup> and the silver hilted sword were part of the basic furniture complement. The rather old-fashioned military items proclaimed the household’s claim to aristocratic lineage; a servant wore the sword and the other items hung in the hall.

<sup>19</sup> Ruth Charlot, Robert Haddock, and William Haddock, "Bond of Ruth Charlot, Laurence Haddock and William Haddock to pay Azariah Pinney 345,412lb of sugar.," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Bristol University Library, 1698).

<sup>20</sup> The word stilliards or stalliards appear in several inventories and could be for duelling, which the Nevisians are well known for, or are guns.



Figure 6.6a . A glazed bookcase circa 1695-1705 made in Britain. From the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK. [Hobson].



Figure 6.6b. A 'Leather backstool' made in Britain during the period 1640 – 1660.

Figure 6.6 Items of furniture in the collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK. [Hobson].

The upper floor of the house had a chamber and bedchamber arrangement.

Distinguished guests and the woman of the house could sit on the covered silk cotton

mattress of the carved bedstead in the chamber.<sup>21</sup> The remainder of the furniture, including a cedar chest, a chest of drawers and some chairs, created the setting for entertaining a number of intimates. The small bedstead belonged in the bedchamber for actual sleeping. The item called a 'press' (which might refer to the large chest of drawers mentioned in later inventories) was of cedar, which suggests a modest quality.

In another part of the premises was the steward room with the brass candlesticks, linen, a lemonade cup or blue jug, cutlery, dishes, plates and three jugs. The butter and barrels of beef and pork were in a separate space, perhaps in an adjacent kitchen.

By 1702, the wealthy Azariah Pinney lived in the house at Charlot's, and, not to be outdone by his associates in St. Christopher, he built a "'shade'" onto the house, which required at least 106 feet of board.<sup>22</sup> This adaptation to the climate considerably changed the appearance of the house. [See figure 6.5]

#### 6.23 Proctors/ Montravers.

One of the most substantial of the Pinney-connected properties in Nevis was Proctors/Montravers. This plantation stood on the outskirts of Charlestown, uphill of Charlot's, and has retained the name of Henry Travers, the last, perhaps third, husband of William Helmes' wife, Mary. At the end of the seventeenth-century, the main house was a large version of the 'three-room' planter house type with a lofted porch entry that emphasized a symmetrical and ordered appearance. [Figures 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9]. [See section 2.3]. The rear of the house did not display the same order because of a large

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<sup>21</sup> Azariah Pinney, "Articles of agreement by Azariah Pinney and Edward Parris to enter into partnership for 4 years dated August 21. Attached is a schedule of particulars of the plantation. signed by Azariah Pinney.," in *Pinney Family Papers. Bristol University Library*. (Bristol: 1697).

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, "List of accounts of the Charlot plantation.," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol, UK: Special Collections, Bristol University Library, 1701/2).

closet extension. Archaeological investigation confirms this layout and suggests dimensions of 16 feet by 60 feet for the basement of the basic three-room form.<sup>23</sup> The basement, paved with local stone, accommodated the steep slope of the site. It had a stone-revetted back wall, and the opposite wall was above ground, which allowed for ventilation. Archaeologists recovered a splayed, dressed and plastered window reveal, which indicates the standard of finish of the basement, but noted that there was also evidence of planted post construction near the cellar.<sup>24</sup> Pieces of glazed Delft tile from the late seventeenth century found on the site substantiate the dating of the cellar.<sup>25</sup>

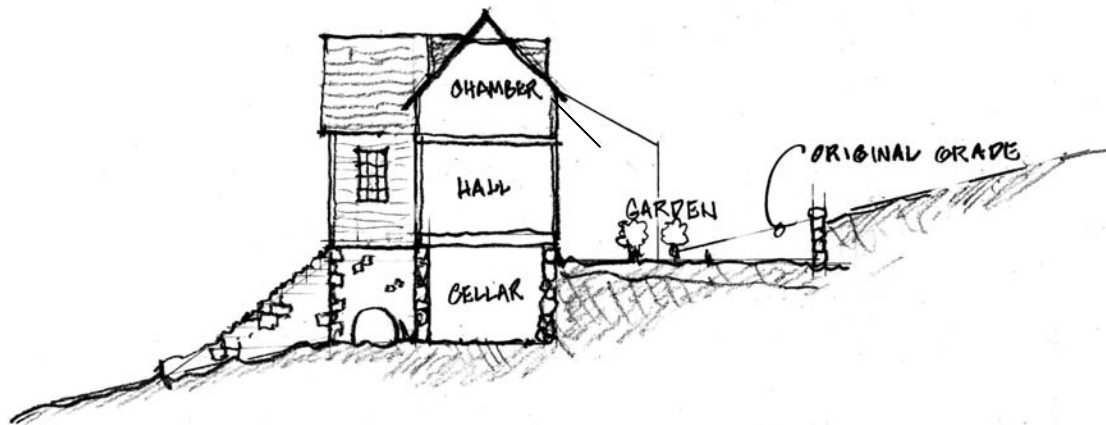


Figure 6.7. Conjectural section of the Proctor's/Montravers main house pre-1706 Raid. [Hobson].

In 1701, William Helmes widow, Mary, wrote about her “Mountain Plantation at Proctor’s”, which included, along with Negroes and sugar processing equipment, what

<sup>23</sup> E. Morris and R. Leech, Crosby, A., Machling, T., and Williams, B.,, "Nevis Heritage Project Interim Report 2001," (Southampton: University of Southampton, 2002). 52.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 53.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 50-52.

she called her “mountain house”, possibly because of its elevation 320 feet above sea-level.<sup>26</sup> She described the accommodation as “One dwelling house with Eight Rooms, one large closet and porch, one steward room and [s]table”.<sup>27</sup> This indicates that the large house had a cross-gable appearance on the front, was 1½ or 2 stories high and that it stood on a cellar because of the site gradient. The house on its high stone basement was so carefully accommodated to the steep site that it appeared much larger from the



Figure 6.8. Hermitage House, Nevis (ca. 1700) showing the lofted porch chamber. [Hobson].  
The structure on the right is a round stone cistern.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 43.

<sup>27</sup> Mary Travers, "Inventory of her mountain plantation by Mary Travers together with instructions to her overseer, Chris<sup>t</sup> Wattis, & his promise to carry them out.," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Bristol University Library, 1701).



Figure 6.9. Hermitage House, Nevis (ca 1700) showing the original vertical wooden siding of the porch, now painted yellow. [Hobson].

approach than it was in reality. It also sheltered a secluded rear garden from the searing afternoon sun. There were only a few items in the house because Mary Helmes Travers was preparing to leave for England and must have removed her luxurious linen, china and fabric hangings. [Table 6.2] The furniture that remained in the house was the basic complement, in the tradition dating from the medieval period, which included a formal bed and a bed for sleeping in:

A large [bedstead], One Deale ditto, 7 chairs and three tables, 3 large jars, 6 horses"...[in the kitchen was] "one pr of andirons, one copper kettle, one iron ditto, 2 spitts and a parcel of old irons".<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

**Table 6.2 Partial Transcript of Excerpts from A list of ye Negroes ye— for my Mountain Plantation. Mary Helmes. Dated Nevis June the 3rd day 1761.**

Agreed with Christopher to be xxx (overseer?) my Mountain Plantation at Proctors & I do allow him thirty pounds current money of thes island and two xxx(barrels?) codfish and Indian provision for himself and wife....

An Inventory of what is at my Mountain Plant.  
 one dwelling house with Eight rooms  
 one large closet and porch  
 one kitchen steward room and table (stable?)  
 one boyling house with 4 coppers  
 two copper coolers xx wood: in sugar potts  
 One cass.<sup>c</sup> mill stills worm one spare shithead

In my dwelling house:	In the kitchen:
one large bedstead	one pr. Of Andirons
one Deale ditto	one copper kettle one iron ditto
7 chairs and three tables	2 spitts and a parcel of old irons
3 large jarrs	1 iron crow bar
6 horses, 4 cattle one colt	1 lock ~

Documents and archaeological findings point to construction of at least four houses on the same site before the end of the eighteenth century. The Proctor's, early owners, built a wooden house on the site prior to 1680<sup>29</sup>; further research may reveal whether it was had a *carbet* round end form. Quite possibly, the earthquake of 1690 damaged the Proctors' construction or there were new architectural ideas and the round end was no longer socially acceptable. Definitely, the subsequent owners, Robert Helmes<sup>30</sup> and his partner William Freeman, redeveloped and extended the residence with the large closet outshot at about this time. It is possible that the outshot contained a

<sup>29</sup> Proctor John Moore, "Proctor John Moore's discharge for the Plantation.," in *Pinney Family papers*. Bristol University. (Bristol: 1680).

<sup>30</sup> Robert Helme was a merchant in Nevis in 1676 and later an agent for the Royal African Company until his death in 1684. [Vere Langford. MRCS Oliver, ed., *Caribbeana being miscellaneous papers relating to the History, geneology, Topography and Antiquities of the British West Indies.*, vol. 1 and 2 (London, England.: Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, 140 Wardour Street West., 1916). Vol2. 359.]



pantry and buttery, but it could have provided a bedchamber.<sup>31</sup> The last wooden building standing on the site post-dates the depredations of the French in 1706.

#### 6.24 Azariah Pinney's town house. 1706.

In Charlestown, the wealthy businessman, Azariah Pinney, owned a house that reflected the progressive trends in Europe towards the creation of distinct spaces for the various levels of social encounter in houses and towards the demise of the hall as the primary space for entertainment. It retained customs from feudal times. The personal and business letters point to the great attention paid by the society to rich fabrics, decoration and hierarchy.

In 1706, the prime entertainment room in Pinney's house in Charlestown was the "dining room". The room was the most suitable place to receive the visiting Governor-in-chief after the French Raid.<sup>32</sup> The "large dining room" was on the ground floor of the 1½ or two-story house. Prior to the raid, it had held "tables, chairs, pictures and looking glasses". Wealthy Nevisians had been decorating their houses with paintings and prints for years. Those in Pinney's house were possibly part of the shipment of "24 pictures with frames of several sizes of Dutch draft", which he took possession of in 1692 from William Helmes and Julius Deeds.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> In 1680, Proctor John Moore received the final payment from the African slave-trader William Helmes for the Proctor's property. [Moore.]

<sup>32</sup> Jeffrey Merriweather, "Letter to Azariah Pinney giving his losses during the French invasion etc.," in *Pinney Family Papers. Bristol University Library*. (Bristol: 1708).

<sup>33</sup> Daniel Smith, Azariah Pinney, and D Bevon, "An Inventory and Appraisal of a parcel of Goods in partnership between Major Wm. Helmes Decsd. and Mr Julius Deeds, each one half taken of 20th May 1692.," in *Pinney family Papers. Bristol University Library* (Bristol: 1692).



The 1½ or two-story residence, with detached steward room and kitchen, had “three upper chambers”.<sup>34</sup> [Figure 6.10 and Table 6.3] The three chambers on the upper floor seem to suggest that there were also three on the ground floor, but because internal partitions were not necessarily structural, it is not possible to ascertain the arrangement. The ground floor arrangement may have been similar to Jedediah Hutchinson’s<sup>35</sup> in St Christopher with an office or “counting house” in which Pinney’s “walnut scriptoire” stood. [See Figure 5. 3]. Feudal overtones remained in the décor, for, at the same time, Pinney retained traditional trappings of a hall: a silver hilted sword and two “fuzzos”. This ground floor arrangement was a version of the “symbolic hall of a seventeenth century merchant” of Bristol and London.<sup>36</sup>

The presence of a ‘dining room’, a relatively new term and practice, does not mean that this was a new house, for Pinney did not build it, but bought it in 1699, and the transfer deeds record a series of former occupants.<sup>37</sup> The house was in the north part of Charlestown, near other merchant houses because the deed of sale stated that it was “over against a house now or late belonging to Philip Brome merchant”. It appears that the premises of a business house were a compound with storehouses notwithstanding the legal patter of “houses, outhouses, edifices and gardens, stables and yards”. The French did marginal damage to the timber house in 1706, and the house was back in good repair

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<sup>34</sup> Merriweather.

<sup>35</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8). 59.

<sup>36</sup> Roger H. Leech, "The Symbolic Hall; Historical context and Merchant culture in the Early Modern City," *Vernacular Architecture* 30 (2000).

<sup>37</sup> unknown, "Bargain and sale from Robert Henley and Robert Yate to Azariah Pinney of premises in the North part of Charlestown on the island of Nevis.," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Bristol University Library, 1699). Previous occupants were the Streators, Col. Collingwood, and the Scropes.

by 1711 despite the elevated price of timber.<sup>38</sup> The appearance of the main elevation most probably was symmetrical with a centrally located door in keeping with other houses in the towns of the Leewards in the eighteenth century. [Figure 6.11].

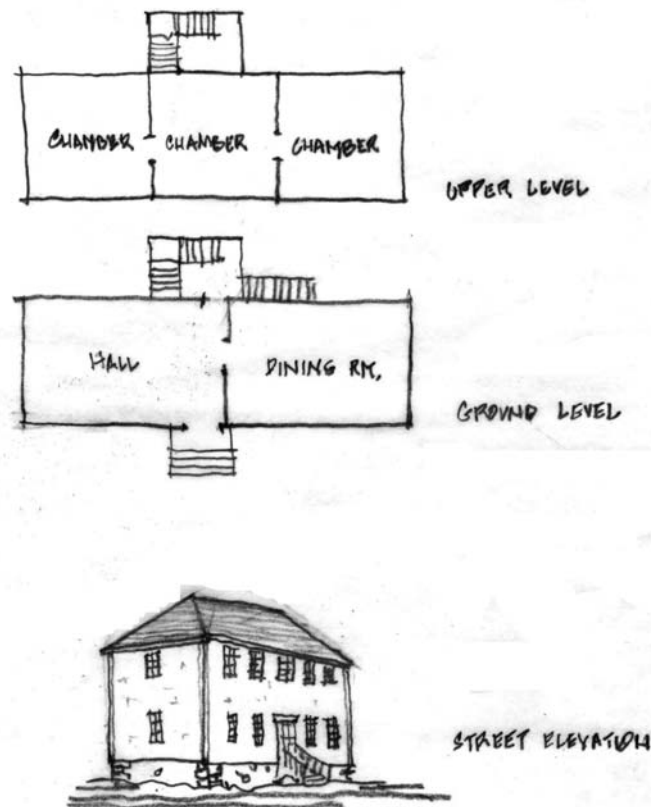


Figure 6. 10. Conjectural plans and elevations of Azariah Pinney's house in Charlestown prior to 1706. [Hobson].

<sup>38</sup> Jeffrey Meriweather, "Accounts out of old books," in *Pinney family Papers* (Bristol: Bristol University Library, 1715).

The goods lost on the business compound in 1706 indicate the type of finishes and materials used in the architecture of the island. The bulky plantation stores included staves for hogsheads and “5000 boards”; the building materials included the “paint lead oyle” or white-lead paint used to protect wooden sash windows, and iron beams.<sup>39</sup> In addition to the casks of nails and “paveing stones”, probably Bristol stone or the blue-grey sandstone from Gloucester, there were twenty hogsheads of lime, which was an additive to mortar for stonework as well as an essential item in sugar processing.

The attention to rich fabrics and the status of bed furniture in the correspondence of the hard-nosed merchant-financiers, Pinney and Merriweather underscores the importance generally then attached to fabrics and appearances, and to the portability of these luxury items. Pinney’s household furniture and his clothing were costly:

Wearing apparel, silk woolen and linen of which he was well furnished. £60...[and]...two feather beds, curtains, vallens, sheets and thereto belonging...the furniture of one other bed, ye bed being saved.<sup>40</sup>

Soon after his son John had married Mary Helmes in England, Pinney admonished the young couple for their inappropriate behavior of actually sleeping in the formal bed of their house in England saying “yr mother is not pleased you lie in the silk bed”.<sup>41</sup> Later in 1711, the ailing Pinney fussed in a letter to the family in England that “I had writt for with bedstead and all implements, but curtains are not to be worsted, but linen or chintz”.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Stephen Calloway and Elizabeth Cromley, eds., *The Elements of Style. A Practical Encyclopaedia of Interior Architectural Details from 1485 to the Present.*, Revised ed. (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). 81.

<sup>40</sup> Merriweather.

<sup>41</sup> Azariah Pinney, “Letter to Son,” in *Pinney Family Papers*. (Bristol, UK.: Special Collections. Bristol University Library., 1710).

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, “Letter to Son,” in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol, UK: Special Collections, Bristol University Library, 1711).

**Table 6.3 Partial Transcript of an Inventory of the Household effects lost by Azariah Pinney late of the Parish of St. Pauls in the aforesaid Island, but now of London, merchant. Given in by Thos. Cottgrave & Jeffrey Morriweather attorneys to the said Pinney is as followeth-**

In Towne

Journey, a negro boy aged 16 years; one fine bay gelding; one black ditto;	na
Two feather beds, curtains, vallens, sheets & thereto belonging	£40
The furniture of one other bed, ye bed being saved	£8
Tables, chairs, pictures and looking glasses for one large dining room and three upper chambers well furnished	£40
Pewter, Drape, ironware etc. for a steward room & kitchen	£18
Table linnen	na
Wearing apparell, silk, woollen and linnen of which he was well furnished	£60
Damage done to his house in Charlestown	£100
Provisions & liquors of sundry sorts in his house	£30
Linnen viz xxx hollands, Indian linnens and striped and spotted cambrick which ware sold Mr. Sheeshaw Cary , other goods as twenety hhds Lime, divers casks of nails, paveing stones. One silver hilted sword, 2 fuzoos and one pair pistoles, with saddle and furniture.	
5000 boards and staves	
18 ton of Cadque	
8 barrills flour	
Paint lead oyle, a box of white gauze	
6 New silver spoons, 6 silver forks	
1 walnut scriptoire	
1 chest Drawers	
iron beams, several pieces of timber	
3 fringed hammacas and 1 coloured one	
ducks, drakes, geese, ganda, sow, boare, milch cow.	

At his plantation called Charlots

One dwelling house of two roomes below and above, boarded, shingled and good timber	£250
One boyling house boarded and shingled	£150
xxx	
copper wheel, brasses xxx with a new half gudgeon	

At his plant' called Charlots

mill	
18 acres Rattons canes would have made 2000 sugar/acre	
divers printed books value	£9



Figure 6.11a. An early eighteenth century residence in Basseterre, St. Kitts. 2007. [Hobson].



Figure 6.11b. An eighteenth century residence in the oldest section of St. John's, Antigua, which may approximate the appearance of Azariah Pinney's house in Charlestown. 2006. [Hobson]

Figure 6.11. Street elevations of eighteenth-century houses in the towns of Basseterre, St. Christopher and St. Johns, Antigua.

#### 6.24. Christian Brome's Houses. 1706 to 1719.

The two residences of the wealthy and educated Christian Brome reflect the distinctions between town and country houses and forms that were evident in St. Christopher in 1706. In addition, the number and detail of the inventories reveal the polite and cultured lifestyle of the town and the more traditional manners of the plantation.

Madam Christian Brome had arranged her large shingled country house for entertaining on a grand scale. The house in St. Thomas' parish was only about two miles outside of Charlestown. One can almost pinpoint the location because it was "situate lyeing and being above Old Road in the parish of St. Thomas"<sup>43</sup>, which is on the present-day Four Seasons Resort golf course. By 1706 the Brome house differed from that shown on the *Hack Chart (1687)* primarily because it had a porch; the building may have been considerably reconstructed in the twenty year interval. The house stood on an elevated site and it must have enjoyed cooling breezes, certainly it had an excellent view to the sea. According to Meriweather, Pinney's business partner, it displayed symbols of the gentry:

At their plantation, that was the Lady Baudons mansion...176 acres...one new boyling house of good timber. £200; one large mansion house & the outhouses with cookroom, steward room, stable, pigeon house, & the house very large and good timber all boarded and shingled... £500.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Mary on behalf of Pinney, "Inventory taken and appraisement of the personal estate of Christian Brome taken this Island as the same was shown us this first day of February 1720.," in *Pinney Family Papers*. *Bristol University Library*. (Bristol: 1720).

<sup>44</sup> Meriweather, "Fragment of notes of Jeffrey Merriweather to Azariah Pinney of their losses in the French Raid of 1706.."

According to Christian Brome, the country house, destroyed in the 1706 French raid, was a large version of the planter ‘three-room’ house type with a lofted porch, but it had an asymmetry due to the three chambers:

A dwelling house consisting of 3 chambers, one hall, one porch and porch chamber, stable and outhouse, cook room and 2 steward rooms, boarded shingles and well-built with good hard timber with pigeon house and other necessities thereof all burnt and destroyed by ye enemy... £800.”<sup>45</sup>

Whether the house presented an asymmetrical appearance on the front or had a large closet to the rear similar to the Proctor’s/ Montravers house is not apparent from the documents. The architectural current in the Leewards was towards an increase in symmetry and formality thus it is reasonable to assume that the third chamber was a closet to the rear of the house. [Figure 6. 12] In terms of the entry elevation with the hall, porch and porch chamber arrangement, the appearance of the Brome house is consistent with the Hermitage House (ca. 1700) in St. Johns Parish, Nevis. [See Figures 6.8 and 6.9].

The presence of two steward rooms was an indication of the ability of the householder to entertain in a grand style. The abundance of tableware listed evidently required two steward rooms, possibly to separate the finer crockery from the everyday sets. The inventory of household goods in 1706 is extensive, and, *inter alia*, lists five dozen each of plates and chairs. [Table 6.4]. The “large silver bason” and “large porringer” indicate the continuing tradition of the wassail cup, whereas her “4 looking glasses; three swing glasses”, the “eight pairs of brass candlesticks” suggest that the Bromes’ grand entertaining often took place during the evening. The emphasis on light

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<sup>45</sup> Madam Christian Brome, "Account of Losses sustained by Christian Brome on her proper estate the late invasion of the aforesaid island in the month of March 1706.," in *Pinney Family Papers*. *Bristol University Library*. (Bristol: 1705/6).

fixtures, reflections and evening entertainment was in keeping with the trend towards higher levels of illumination and larger areas of glazed windows in Europe in elegant houses.<sup>46</sup> In addition to the brass candlesticks were the two large silver candlesticks, probably standing on the floor flanking a mirror, and the “1 hand ditto [candlestick]” that lit the way to bed at night. Other indicators of her lifestyle were the “3 washing kettles”, “6 house brushes with long handles”, presumably for removal of cobwebs; the “ditto short” for sweeping; the “long handle scrubbing brushes”, perhaps for the floors; along with the “washing flaskets” and “small scrub brushes”; all of which demonstrate Christian Brome’s great concern for cleanliness.

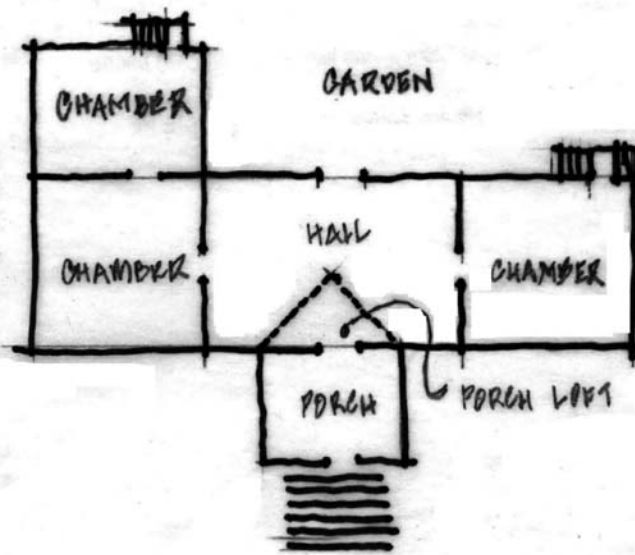


Fig. 6.12 Conjectural plan of the main floor of Christian Brome’s country house at Lady Baudon’s pre-1706. [Hobson]

<sup>46</sup> John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort. Sensibilities & Design in Early Modern Britain & Early America*. (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press., 2001). Chapter 4.



**Table 6.4 Partial Transcript of an Inventory of the Household effects lost by Madam Brome when the French invaded this Island in February and March 1706. Nevis.**

Clothing:

a pair womens silk knitted hose; a pair womens scarlett ditto; xxx;  
3 1/2 pair bagg holland; 3 pair sheeting ditto; 5 pair plain muslin; 11 pr. Scotch cloth.

Household goods:

8 pr. Holland sheets	2 large tankards
7 pr. Holland coursers	one quart ditto
2 new damask table cloath with 1/2 (doz) napkins & 1 toyell	two large candlesticks
6 Huccaback table cloaths	1 hand ditto
4 side board tables	two salvers
5 dzn of new huccaback napkins; 1 1/2 dzn worn	2 dzn new spoons
6 pair holland sheets worne	10 old ditto
8 pair pillowcases of sundry sorts	1 dozen silver handle knives
5 dzn caine chairs }	1 ditto of forks
5 two armed ditto and 2 new cained chairs }	2 small silver salts
4 large looking glasses; three swing glasses }	3 drawn dishes
One small ovale table with addressing box and stands 4	3 pairs snifters
One ditto without stands	6 house brushes with long handles
2 Chest Drawers worne	and ditto s short
a featherbed with curtains and other furniture	6 long handle scrubbing brushes
5 dozen new plate	1 dozen washing flasketts
1 dozen small new Cluster dishes	1 dzn small scrub brushes
1 dozen large dishes half worne	4 large hamakas
2 magazines	
3 stands	One iron chest and in it £800 this country
5 iron potts	currency in currant money of this island
2 bell mettle skilletts	a parcel of Spanish money value £200
3 washing kettles	
a very large ditto	Losses in the parish of St. Paules:
one copper kettle with a cover	2 cedar chests
8 pair brass candlesticks	4 dzn China dishes
a pair iron racks	1 dzn small China plates
one fender	
a large pair tongs	
5 spitts of several sizes	
3 oval tables	
1 deale press well wrought	
1 square framed table	
3 new hare trunks	
2 cedar chests	
4 1/2 dzn china dishes; 1 dzn china small plates and 1 ditto small bason	
1 large brass chafing dish & 2 bell metal mortars	
a suite of joint/point new bonelace (bengal) and my wearing apparel	
one copper	
one gold case for a watch	
one large silver bason	
one large porringer	
one silver ladle	
one large silver caster	

The house in town was compact and private in that it had 1 ½ or two stories and was very fashionable with its most public entertainment area being the parlor; the hall was little more than a vestibule by usage. [Figure 6.13] The house was part of a bustling compound with a boiling house and shops:

one house in the Parish of St Paul boarded and shingled, sashed, two rooms below, two upper rooms, one storehouse backward lofted with one loer and 1 upper room, and two other storehouses of considerable length each, one boiling house, cooper shop, -----conveniences thereunto belonging, well built with good hard timber which was burnt by the enemy valued £700.<sup>47</sup>

In contrast with the terse description of the building, the attention Christian Brome paid to preparing an extensive list of the contents of her houses reflects the social significance of the contents; she did not actually own either house.<sup>48</sup>

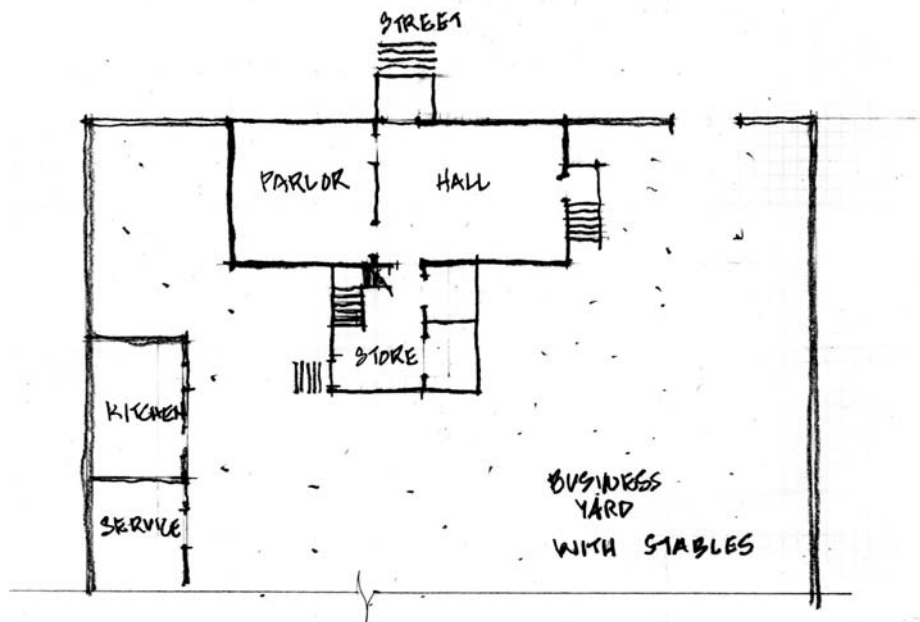


Figure 6.13 Conjectural ground floor plan of Christian Brome's house in Charlestown pre-1706 within a compound. [Hobson].

<sup>47</sup> Brome.

<sup>48</sup> Christian Helme, "Letter from Christian Helme to Mary Pinney," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol: Bristol University Library, 1729).

Similar to other houses of very wealthy colonists, the house had a shingle finish and sash windows. It is not known whether the sash windows were of cedar like Joseph Crisp's in St. Christopher, but they certainly had wooden frames painted with white lead paint, similar to those in the neighboring Pinney establishment. The wooden sash confirms the fashionable affluence of the colonists because, by 1700, vertically sliding sash windows had become common only in the better houses of England.<sup>49</sup> There is evidence of other houses in the town with a similar lofted or two-story form. [Figure 6.14].

The Brome compound, which included both the workshop for a cooper to make hogsheads and barrels for shipping sugar and molasses, and storehouses for sugar awaiting shipment and for incoming merchandize, was similar to those of 1676 that Governor in Chief Stapleton described:

Nevis...Charlestown where...To all and most houses there are several sheds for the reception of goods imported and more particularly being of greater bulk, of goods exported, also for strength.<sup>50</sup>

The fire hazard created by compounds similar to the Bromes' clearly contributed to the passage of an Act in 1701 prohibiting the distillation of rum and molasses in the town:

That the distilling of skimmings or Melasses, within the limits of Charles Town on this island has proved of very pernicious consequence to the Spring water near the said town, and doth occasion noisome Stincks and smells whereby the shipping and inhabitants are much annoyed.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Calloway and Cromley, eds. 50.

<sup>50</sup> Colonel Wm Stapleton, "Letter from Col. Stapleton with the Answers to Enquiries," in *Colonial State Papers. Colonial Series. National Archives. Britain*. (London: 1676). Folio 370-371

<sup>51</sup> *Laws of Nevis* (Appointed to be printed by Thomas Horne, 1680-1773). No. 37. Confirmed Sept 16, 1701. 27.

After the Raid of 1706, Madam Brome rebuilt the house and apparently made few changes to the 'two room' arrangement of the house, but there is no record of sugar making on the compound.



Figure 6.14a. The Wenham House in Charlestown. (Now demolished).



Figure 6.14b. The Wenham House in Charlestown from the north.  
Note the large dormer and the shed, possibly a storeroom.

Figure 6.14. Photographs of the two story Wenham House in Charlestown with a rear dormer and shed.  
[Courtesy of the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society.]

The trend in affluent European circles towards functionally discrete domestic spaces is evident in the change in terminology between the inventories of the Brome house of 1706 and that of 1719. After her death, circa 1719, her niece and executrix, Mary Helmes Pinney, called for an inventory of her personal estate and listed the contents under “parlor of her house...the hall...the store...her chamber... the room she lay in”.<sup>52</sup> Apparently, the term ‘bedchamber’ was not yet available in the Pinney circles to distinguish between the intimate entertainment space and sleeping space.

The hall in 1719 retained only a vestige of its original status; it was now a vestibule in which stood some older furniture of “12 cane chairs and 2 elbow chairs much worn”. The parlor and the upstairs chamber had become the places for entertaining, but there was a distinction between the type of guest and form of entertainment. In the parlor on the ground floor was furniture for dinners and teas; there was an oval walnut table, a dozen cane chairs as well as two armchairs. [Figure 6.15]. In another area of the parlor, perhaps toward a corner, a tea table would have been laid with china, complete with silver spoons for taking tea and chocolate. The ‘obligatory’ “large looking glass” hung on one wall; there was a “squab”<sup>53</sup> couch with pillows. Typical in houses with educated owners, there was a “porte mante” with papers, which was probably a replacement for the “addressing box”, which had sat on a table she had lost in 1706.<sup>54</sup>

The furniture list of the chamber on the upper floor of the house indicates that Madam Brome’s chamber was for entertaining her intimates in the traditional way with the elaborately dressed white damask bed in the room:

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<sup>52</sup> on behalf of Pinney.

<sup>53</sup> Squab: is a generously stuffed mattress or cushion used on a couch. [Forman. 248].

<sup>54</sup> Brome.

12 black caine chairs and 2 elbow chairs; one case of drawers; one white damask bed bolster and pillows; one large looking glass; one black card table; 2 diaper table cloathes worne; 11 diaper napkins and 2 towels worne; 4 huckabuck table cloathes worne.<sup>55</sup>



Figure 6.15a An addressing box made in Britain circa 1580 – 1620.



Figure 6.15b. A caned chair made in Britain circa 1695-1705.

Figure 6.15. An addressing box and caned chair in the collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK. [Hobson].

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<sup>55</sup> Mary Pinney, "Inventory taken and appraisement of the personal estate of Christian Brome taken this Island as the same was shown us this first day of February 1720.," in *Pinney Family Papers*. Bristol University Library. (Bristol: 1720).

The furniture had its own hierarchy, which reached back into history to the period before chairs were padded or stuffed; in those days, the bed was the premier place for seating because it was more comfortable than wooden chairs. The armchairs were intermediate between the bed and the ordinary chairs for less esteemed guests. The cane chairs would have lined the wall except when around the card table. The ‘black’ of the furniture refers to the fashionable japanned finish. In comparison to the elegant chamber was the actual sleeping space with “an ordinary bed and bedstead”. This was the residence of a serious reader, for in those days before novels she owned “11 small books” and a copy of *The Duty of Man* (1682) by Samuel Von Pufendorf in the elegant quarto format.<sup>56</sup>

In the probate inventory, Mary Pinney had recorded her aunt’s personal property, property that was not tied to the premises. However, she returned to the house the next year for additional items including the sash windows, which she claimed were a box in the steward room.<sup>57</sup> The removal of sash was a practice at the time, for traditionally, they were not considered an integral part of the house; they were classed as personal property in the same way as paintings.

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<sup>56</sup> Pinney Merchant House, "Nevis. August 7 1721....then told Mrs. Christian Helmes the following particulars being the personal estate of Madam Christian Brome deceased vizt.," in *Pinney Family Papers*. *Bristol University Library* (Bristol: 1721).

<sup>57</sup> on behalf of Pinney.

## 6.26 Mary Helmes Pinney's House. 1722.

Mary Helmes Pinney's house at Governors' in St. John's Parish was a large version of the three-room planter house type; the Island Councilors thought it appropriate to serve as a residence for a governor. Mary Pinney prepared the house expressly to accommodate the newly appointed Governor-general Hart on visits to the island; the Nevis Council prepared the surviving inventory for the rental of the property for one year.<sup>58</sup> It is reasonable to assume that the furniture and arrangement was fashionable in 1722 because the wealthy planters and merchants were in close contact with England.<sup>59</sup> The arrangement of furniture was hierarchical, and the décor was elegant and expensive, but focused on moveable items, in particular on fabric finishing. The details of the description indicate the importance of the soft furnishings.

The house at Governor's was 1 ½ or 2-stories high with a lofted entry porch. On the ground floor were a hall, two rooms with beds, and an enclosed porch. On the upper floor were two rooms with beds. The rooms with beds had different names: "the northernmost lodging room...the southernmost chamber...the chamber over the hall...the room over the porch. In addition, to the accommodation of the great house, there was a cook room and steward room. The house was consistent with the typical planter houses of the Leewards, but was a large version. [Figure 6.16].

The porch provided access to the house and hall; it was primarily a physical and social transition space, from outside to inside, and was scantily furnished with a "glass

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<sup>58</sup>His Majesty's Council of said Island of Nevis, "Inventory taken and Appraisment made of what household goods lent by Madam Pinney," in *Colonial State Papers* (London: National Archives of Britain, 1722).

<sup>59</sup>Mary Pinney, though born in Nevis, went to school in England, and had lived there for over ten years. At the time of their marriage in 1706, her husband was a gentleman-commoner of Pembroke College, Oxford. [Pares....]



lanthorn” and an “oval table”<sup>60</sup>. The porch would have sheltered the entry from driving rain in the exposed location on Saddle Hill, but a porch is not evident on the 1687 *Map* which suggests that the house had been reconstructed; In the ensuing years a porch had been added and the round ends demolished. [See Figure. 4.20].

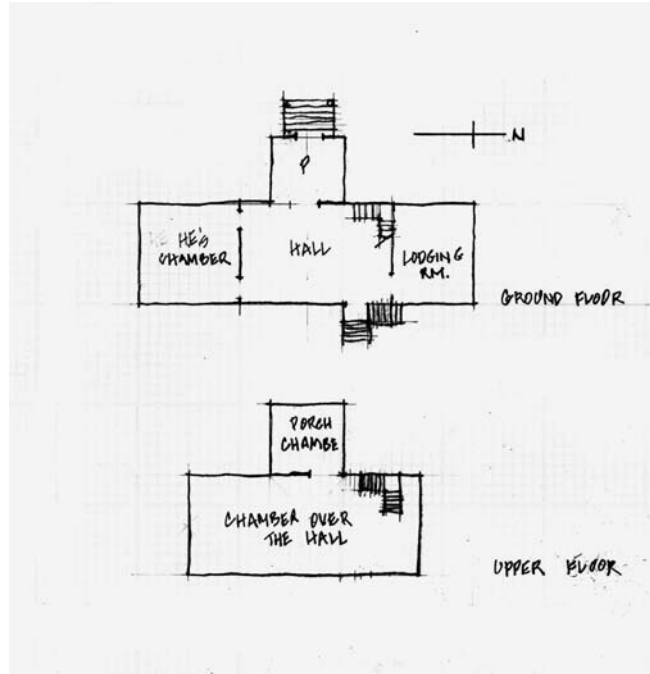


Figure. 6.16 Conjectural layout of Mary Pinney's House at Governor's, St. Johns, in 1722. [Hobson].

The hall was arranged for seating numbers of persons of different ranks at the same time in a single space. Possibly the hall was over 30 feet long, or it would have appeared congested – at least to twenty-first century eyes - for there is no evidence of rooms wider than twenty feet at that time in the Leewards' houses.<sup>61</sup> In the hall were twelve cane chairs, a “large walnut oval table” and a “middling cedar ditto”, which

<sup>60</sup> Lanthorn ME: variation of lantern. [Friedrichsen, ed.]

<sup>61</sup> The hall at Hermitage, Nevis, is 20' x 30'; Capn. Burrell's house in St. Christopher's was also this wide.

connotes that persons would sit at tables according to their social status. The silver also came in two kinds: one dozen with ivory handles, the other with ebony. Both tables were for dining and not for the setting down of dishes, for there was a “buffet” as well as a “large side table on Walnutt stands”; the stands permitted the side table to be folded for dancing and after dinner activities. In addition to the furniture associated with dining, there was the cane couch and a large copper cistern, perhaps for drinking water, weighing 9 pounds. The illumination from six sconces on the wall and the silver candlesticks created an elegant atmosphere for dining.<sup>62</sup> The reflections from the large looking glass enhanced the lighting, as did the more subtle glow and sparkle from the “japanned corner cupboard”, the table silver and the silver “salts” on the fine diaper tablecloths.<sup>63</sup>

The furniture arranged in “the Southernmost Chamber designed for His Excellencies Bedchamber” is consistent with the practice in polite society of having a chamber, later named a withdrawing room, for private conversations with visitors and for family meals. The damask bed<sup>64</sup> with feather mattress, a bolster and two pillows, quilt and counterpane, and the obligatory “two elbow chairs”, were “stuffed and covered with silk”. Lower on the social scale were four black cane chairs, a cane couch with a squab and three stools; they were all upholstered or with cushions of silk. An attached lamp kept the teapot hot. In addition, there were six teaspoons, tongs and a strainer - all in silver- on one of the tables. There was a china teapot and appurtenances for those of lower station, who may have sat on the stools rather than on the chairs. The “walnut case

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<sup>62</sup> Note: Sconce: a bracket candlestick to fasten against a wall. 1450. [Friedrichsen, ed.]

<sup>63</sup> Note: Diaper: ME. OFR. The name of a textile fabric, now usually a linen fabric, woven with patterns showing up by opposite reflections from the surface and consisting of crossing diamond-wise with the spaces filled up by parallel lines, leaves, dots etc. [Ibid.]

<sup>64</sup> Damask: ME a rich silk fabric woven with elaborate designs and figures ( also applied to fabrics of wool, linen or cotton) . 1585. To weave with richly figured designs. To ornament with or as a variegated pattern. To diaper. 1610. [Ibid.] Note: it was a common practice at the time to describe the bedstead and accoutrements by the fabric of the bedclothes.

of drawers” stood available more likely for holding papers than clothing. The [obligatory] looking glass and the material of the glass candlesticks added subtle tones of glitter and light to the room.

There was less furniture in the “northernmost lodging room” than the chamber, and it was valued at half that of the chamber. Whether the room was for sleeping in or was assigned for the woman of the house is not certain. Instead of damask and silk, the lodging room bed was dressed in “striped Holland”<sup>65</sup> with two matching stuffed, elbow chairs. The six cane chairs were not painted, but were appropriate for use at one of the three tables in the room: the middling oval table, the smaller oval one and the black card table. Apart from the tables, there was a “scrutore” or a small desk for correspondence. A large looking glass completed the arrangement of the lodging room.

The two rooms in the loft were at the lower end of the hierarchical arrangements of the house. They both had furniture for sleeping and entertainment, but the chamber with the higher status stood over the hall. The décor was in “blue farrandine”<sup>66</sup> for the bed, quilt and counterpane. The eight chairs, however, had leather upholstery, which was old fashioned. The table in the room was square, thus less elegant than the oval ones on the lower floor. The other room over the porch had a “china bedstead” with fittings and “4 Bermudas with stuffed seats covered with “calamanco”<sup>67</sup>; the table was square and of cedar, a wood inferior to walnut. The term “Bermudas” suggests a colonial design or origin. Clearly, bedclothes of ‘farradine’ and ‘calaminco’ were less glossy than the

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<sup>65</sup> Holland was a linen fabric originally called from the province of Holland in the Netherlands. When unbleached called Brown. 1554. [Ibid.]

<sup>66</sup> Farradine may be farrandine: 1663. A fabric of silk, wool and hair; also a dress made of this. Named by inventor Ferrand of Lyon. 1630. [Ibid.]

<sup>67</sup> Calaminco may be Calamanco. 1592. (1) A glossy woolen fabric stuff of Flanders, twilled and chequered in the warp so that the checks are seen on one side only. [Ibid.]

damask and silk of coverings of the ground floor; the lack of a description suggests they were plain and not figured. One can surmise that calamanco was the most humble of the textiles because of the inferior position of that room over the porch, and not the hall.

A cook room and steward room were on the premises; their contents confirm that they served different functions. The former was for actual cooking and food preparation; it held four spits, a pair of iron backs, iron pots, stew pans, a copper coffee pot, and other cooking implements. The steward room held the everyday pewter tableware of 18 dishes, 2 soup dishes and a cheese plate, along with 3 dozen new plates, pewter rings with covers and saucers, and an iron ring with a heater. The silver, however, including spoons, tankards, three porringers, and pepper casters, was secure in the buffet in the hall along with the china dishes, punch bowl, plates and the ivory and ebony handled knives and forks, snuffers, snuff dishes and a dozen candlesticks.

The house was probably on the Smith-Helmes-Pinney plantation on Saddle Hill, of the *Hack Chart* (1686). There is no reference to the porch or round ends, which could mean that the house had been re-built or renovated. It suffered damage in the 1706 Raid, and in 1713, Mary Pinney received £513:01:00 in compensation for her losses in the Raid.<sup>68</sup> Prior to her return by 1713, Azariah had repaired the roof, because, as he wrote in 1711, “the house must be new covered or will fall”<sup>69</sup>. It is possible that a house had been on the site for some sixty years and that an early governor had lived there, hence the nickname “Governors”. It may have been the residence mentioned by Christopher

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<sup>68</sup> Guilford et al., "Debenture in the name of Mary Helmes of Nevis.," in *National Archives of Britain* (London, UK.: 1713). #208.

<sup>69</sup> Azariah Pinney, "Letter to Sons," in *Pinney Family Papers* (Bristol, UK: Special Collections, Bristol University, 1711).

Jeaffreson in 1676, “where Mr. Helmes, the merchant....conducted us to Col. Russell’s, the Governors, where I remayned three days”<sup>70</sup>.

In spite of the wealth of the Pinney family, the form and layout of the house at Governor’s or Saddlehill retained a traditional or vernacular layout up to 1722. It is possible that the occupants considered that the house type was comfortable and adequate for their requirements, or possibly during the roof repair project, the carpenters installed a lower-pitched roof in a move away from the earlier Gothic verticality to the lower, calmer rooflines of classical architecture that integrated Carib techniques with European styles to withstood hurricanes efficiently. These roofs were common in mid-eighteenth century Nevis. [Figures 6.17 and 6.18].

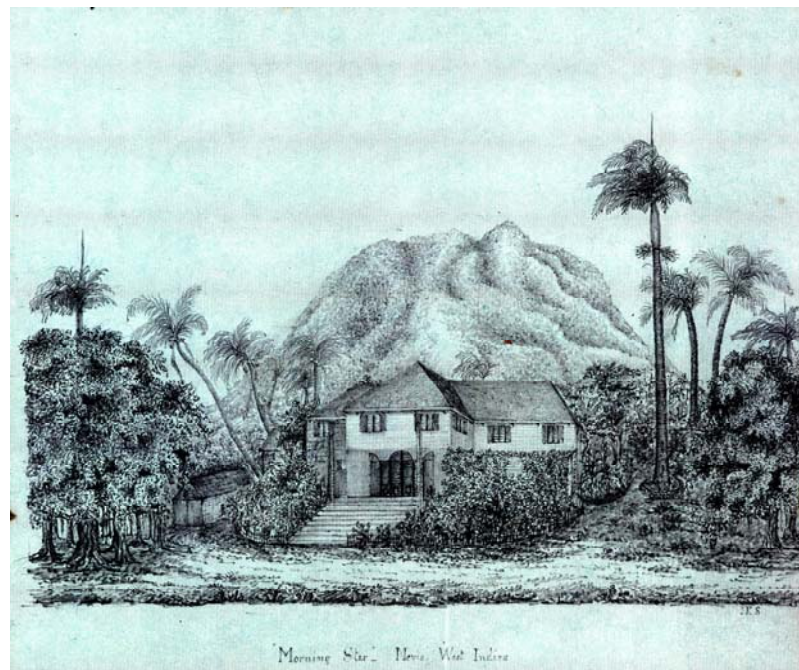


Figure 6.17. Morning Star House, Nevis. Sketch of the two-storied planter house that was prepared by a family member in 1840. [Courtesy of Nevis Historical and Conservation Society.]

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<sup>70</sup> John Cordy Jeaffreson, author of "A Book About Doctors", "Brides and Bridals" etc, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century from Papers (AD 1676-1686)* (London: Hurst and Blackett, Publishers., 1878). 181.



Figure 6.18. Hamilton House, Charlestown, Nevis, (18<sup>th</sup> century). [Courtesy of the Nevis Historical & Conservation Society].

A 1½-story house on the outskirts of historic Charlestown. The house has a full height cellar that is ventilated by small windows. The structural timber shows evidence of being re-used which suggests that the house may have been moved to the site, or damaged at some time.

### 6.3 SUMMARY.

The seven residences of the wealthy families of Antigua and Nevis illustrate the change from Carib-influenced structures to those reflecting ideas of symmetry; additionally they indicate a diversity and expression of individuality within the three primary house types. The fact that affluent Antiguan built residences in limestone adds a new perspective to the issue of the persistence of timber construction in the other Leewards with bountiful supplies of volcanic stone. The residences demonstrate a fashionable trend or tendency towards the differentiation and naming of internal spaces by function. There is evidence of great interest in illumination and lighting effects that enhanced the glossy appearance of the furniture and furnishing. The attention given in the inventories and correspondence to the fabric furnishing is indicative of the delight of

the inhabitants of the Leewards in expensive and rich-looking fabrics in the early eighteenth century.<sup>71</sup> As in all human affairs, the adoption of the new fashions was inconsistent across the sample, and the new terminology about functional space was more pronounced in the town than on the plantation.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>This attention to luxurious fabrics was deeply rooted in medieval Europe where the monarchs, with retainers, undertook lengthy peregrinations to country houses and castles. It was not feasible either to carry around all the furniture, fittings and utensils for these large households, or to outfit each location to the desired standard. The result was that much of the demonstration of wealth of the colonists was in portable furniture, cloth hangings, clothing and bed fittings. It was easier to protect these soft items, in insecure times, than bulky furniture, which became the fixed complement of a house. [Lucie-Smith.]

<sup>72</sup>The illegal trade in fabrics from the Dutch and French islands caused great concern to Christopher Codrington III during his tenure (1700-1702) as Governor-General of the Leeward Islands. In official documents, he reported that in spite of numerous seizures of foreign goods, the quantity of French linen seized amounted to barely five percent of the fabric “shuffled away and concealed by some English well-wishers to ye smuggling trade”. [Harlow. 115. C.O.152/4, No.12, National Archives of Britain. (12 January 1701).]

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## **CHAPTER 7 – SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.**

This chapter concludes the study. It starts by outlining the background of the topic and region, and the research methodology. Then it proceeds to delineate the major house types of the British Leeward Island settlers in roughly chronological order and associates them and their evolution with the mental models of the settlers' existence. Finally, there is a discussion of the findings drawn from the study and recommendations for future research.

### **7.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

In 1624 an Englishman, Thomas Warner, with fifteen companions made a settlement on St. Christopher's island in the West Indies; this was the first English settlement to survive and become permanent in the American tropics. The population of English and Irish grew so rapidly that the overflow from St. Christopher went to the neighboring islands of Nevis in 1627, Montserrat in 1631 and Antigua in 1632. These were the four main islands of the British 'Leeward Island' colony until they gained the right to self-government in the 1960s. [See figure 1.1] In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the settlers had to deal with challenges from the Spanish, who claimed ownership of the West Indies, and from the French, who had divided St. Christopher with

the English in 1625. In addition, there were the natural hazards of earthquakes and hurricanes. Nevertheless, the Leeward colonies thrived and generated wealth for the planters and Britain from the cultivation of sugar cane; the wealth was on a scale out of proportion with the islands' small size.<sup>1</sup>

The economic realities of the innovative period when the settlers fomented the 'Sugar Revolution' are well documented; however, there is a peculiar lack of knowledge about the living conditions and architecture of the settlers. In addition, there is not an adequate number of extant structures for conjecture about the general patterns and trends of the architecture.

Neither the English nor the French travelers of the seventeenth to eighteenth century described the houses of the English in the Leewards in detail. They recorded that the houses of the landowners were well built in masonry or timber, were low structures and that the architecture of the French and English settlers differed:

in all the islands where the nations are better settled and accommodated, there are many fine houses of timber, stone and brick, built after the same manner as those in their own countries save that for the most part they are but one or two stories high at the most".<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, some settlers lived in structures similar to those of the Caribs:

At the first coming of the foreign nations into the islands, they were lodg'd much after the same manner as the natural inhabitants of the country, in little cotts and hutts made of the wood they fell'd upon the place as they clear'd the ground.... these weak structures, which are sustained only by four or six forks planted in the ground, and instead of walls are encompass'd and

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<sup>1</sup> The land area of St. Christopher = 50 sq. miles, Nevis = 36 sq. miles, Montserrat = 40 sq. miles and Antigua = 108 sq. miles.

<sup>2</sup> Cesar de Rochefort, *"Histoire naturelle et morale des Iles Antilles de l'Amerique"* - *"The history of the caribby Islands viz Barbadoes, St. Christophers, St. Vincents, Martinico, Dominico, Barbouthos, Montserrat, Nevis, Antigo, etc in all XXV111---With a Caribbean -vocabulary.*, trans. John of Kidwelly translated from the anonymous French edition of 1658 by Davies, translation ed. (London:: printed by J.M. for Thomas Dring and John Starkey and are to be sold at their shop... 1666). 177.

palizado'd only with reeds, and covered with palm or plaintaine leaves, sugar-canes or some such material.<sup>3</sup>

The French wrote in some detail about indigenous buildings, the large oval *carbets* and smaller structures of the Caribs, but this was post contact with Europeans.

In recent publications, scholars have debated the extent to which the Caribbean influenced the architecture of the North American colonies or was similar to it. They have looked for the origin of features that did not appear to have originated in Britain; the presence of detached kitchens is one example. Others have noted the presence of a single story, enfilade 'three room' house type in the coastal regions of the wider Caribbean region.<sup>4</sup> Another sphere of scholarly activity is ongoing surveys by archaeologists and geographers; these investigations have lead to the identification of early sites and significant attributes of buildings such as the earth-fast or post-in-ground construction of houses.

This study's intention to recover information about the general patterns of the settlers' houses lead to the examination of archival material in collections in the UK, the USA and the Caribbean. The research was accomplished through a series of visits to four major archives with extensive collections of official seventeenth and eighteenth century manuscripts, to fourteen minor archives and collections in search of detailed information in personal or business correspondence, and by accessing reproductions of known documents. [Figure 7.1]. The historical material was primarily in the form of inventories

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 177.

<sup>4</sup> See Christophe Charlery, "Maisons de maitre et habitations coloniales dans les anciens territoires francais de l'Amerique tropicale.," (2004), <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/revue-inv/insitu5/d4/d4new/html/d4new.html>. Jay D. Edwards, "The origins of Creole Architecture," *Winterthur Portfolio* (1994).

and short descriptions as well as a small number of drawings and official maps. This form is common for both vernacular structures and for the pre-industrial era when builders had little need for detailed drawings.

The nature of the accumulated historical data lent itself to both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. It included a body of 311 brief descriptions and inventories of domestic buildings on St. Christopher, dated 1707/8, which was prepared for the British Parliament after a devastating raid by the French.<sup>5</sup> Statistical analysis of this volume identified significant patterns and characteristics of the architecture. However, the building descriptions appeared incomplete, as only one part of a communication or in need of a context. They clearly referred to a body of knowledge that was held by both the writers and readers. The study hypothesized that this knowledge was, in large part, the vernacular architecture of the British Isles, where the majority of the European settlers originated; this led to a review of literature about the housing and building traditions of the relevant countries.

The study found that during the first century of English settlement, the domestic architecture in the Leeward Caribbean islands followed a nuanced path of adoption and integration of Carib and British traditions. The buildings projected cultural values and the changing self-image of the leading settlers. The first settlers were tobacco farmers, but the later generations developed into affluent sugar planters and merchants at a hub of the Atlantic maritime economy. Gradually, the settlers configured the tropical island landscapes in order to produce an appearance of “Englishness”, which they felt would

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<sup>5</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8).

guarantee their survival and wealth creation and provide them with the psychological reassurance of being part of a larger identity.<sup>6</sup> This last was essential on the enclave of small islands that felt threatened by enemies and natural hazards.

#### SCHEDULE OF ARCHIVES VISITED OR ACCESSED FOR THIS PROJECT.

1. Major Public repositories of State, official and legal documents:-  
National Archives of St. Kitts, Basseterre, St. Kitts;  
National Archives of Britain, Kew, London, UK;  
British Library, Euston, London, UK.; and  
National Archives of Antigua and Barbuda, St. Johns, Antigua.
2. Minor Archives and Special Collections in University Libraries:-  
Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY.  
Pinney Family Papers, Bristol University, Bristol, UK.  
Stapleton Family Collection, Manchester University, Manchester, UK.  
Map Room, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
3. Museums, Trusts, Art Galleries and Registries of Deeds:-  
Montserrat National Trust, Salem, Montserrat;  
The Public Library, Brades, Montserrat;  
Registry of Deeds of the Supreme Court, Brades, Montserrat;  
Museum of Antigua and Barbuda, St. Johns, Antigua;  
Registry of Deeds of the Supreme Court, Charlestown, Nevis;  
Nevis Historical and Conservation Society, Bath, Nevis;  
St. Christopher Heritage Society, Basseterre, St. Kitts;  
Registry of the Supreme Court, Basseterre, St. Kitts.  
Central Library, University of the West Indies, Mona.  
Tate Britain, London, UK.
4. Examination of digital copies of selected items from the following collections:  
Carter Brown Library, Providence, RI; In the UK: Bedfordshire & Luton Archives;  
Bristol Records Office; Gloucestershire Records Office; Somerset Archives;  
Nottinghamshire Archives; Surrey History Center; Lincolnshire Archives;  
West Yorkshire Archives; Herefordshire Archives.

Figure 7.1 List of archives and collections visited or accessed for this project.

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<sup>6</sup> See Jack P. Greene, "Colonial History and National History: Reflections on a Continuing Problem," *William and Mary Quarterly 3rd Series* LXIV, no. 2 (2007). Hilary McD Beckles, "A "riotous and unruly lot": Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713.," *The William and Mary Quarterly 3rd series.*, Vol.47, no. 4 (1990).

In the first years after 1624, the pioneers visualized the Leewards as a frontier of England with Spain. The pioneers settled in a dispersed pattern in order to seize substantial tracts of the most fertile land on which they farmed with their servants. A number of adventurers erected strong houses of stone and timber in the more exposed and isolated locations; the concept of fortified manor houses, tower houses and ‘peel’ towers was well established in the border areas of England, Ireland and France. The first recorded ‘tower house’, in fact, belonged to the governor of French St. Christopher. According to an extant etching, the *dePoincy* chateau had classical detailing, and terraced gardens with fountains surrounded it; this was current with the latest European taste. [See Figure 2.3]. In the English colonies, according to official documents, some persons considered ‘States Castel’ in Montserrat the most elegant house in the American colonies in 1654; it was still standing in 1673, when depicted in the *Map of Mountserratt*, submitted to the Lords of Trades and Plantations in London. [See Figure 4.4a] The longest surviving tower house stood at Newcastle in Nevis until 1996, when it was demolished for expansion of the airport. [See Figure 4.5]

By the 1670’s, the layout of a typical sugar plantation was established. It comprised a number of freestanding structures; the planter’s residence was a ‘three-room’ house served by a kitchen and steward room in a separate structure:

one good and fine = rentable dwelling = house of Three Rooms, one steward and cooking room, one good boyling house for 4 or 5 coppers, one still house with appurtenances....and the said Housing Buildings and Mill frame etc. (together with the demised land)... a cattle mill, four coppers and a still, still house and worm with two slaves.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> "St. Christopher's Deed Book," in *St. Kitts Archives* (Basseterre: 1698-1701). P24



The majority of planters lived in house that were described as ‘low’, which refers to their height of one or 1 ½ stories, but it may also have referred to a type of hip roof that was common. The British settlers had adopted the oval Carib structure called a *carbet* for their farmhouses in the early years; they arranged the cool interior with its palisade sides according to the traditional three-room farm and manor houses of North-west Europe. Then there followed a process of ‘Anglicization’ of the appearance of the Caribbean planter house to that of a symmetrical farmhouse of post-medieval England. Official maps documents several stages of the transition. [Figure 7.2]. In 1706, in St. Christopher, the owners of the remaining planter houses were from the wealthiest families of the island. [See Figure 5.22]. The textual description of one of the *carbet*-derived houses, the Bourryau house on St. Christopher, relates that it had only one round end:

A Dwelling House 55 foot long, 18 foot wide ,Consisting of a Hall, 2 Chambers & one Round End built with Hard Timber Mastick Lignum vita Iron wood and Yellow Sandor posts boarded round brikt under foot and covered with thatch...£200.00<sup>8</sup>.

The house probably was similar to the Westbury house on the crest of a hill on Nevis, depicted on the *Hack Chart* (1687) [See Figure 4. 19]; the exposed location of this and the Smith house on Nevis indicates the extent to which the settlers relied on the resilience of the *carbet* in hurricanes and earthquakes. [Figure 7.2(a)]. Major Caines’ house on the *Map of Mountserrat* (1673) illustrates a further stage of the transition with one round end and a central cross-gable or enclosed entry porch. [Figure 7.2 (b)]. A later stage of the Anglicized *carbet* house was the house belonging to the captain-general of Montserrat

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<sup>8</sup> Gillard et al. Folio 17.

(1673); it had two end gable walls and an arched open sided porch with column supports.

[Figure 7.2 (d)].

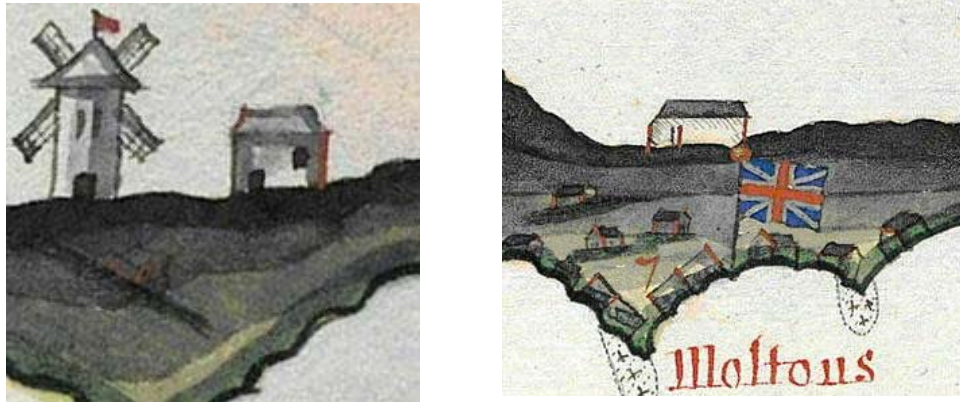


Figure 7.2 (a). Detail of the *Hack Chart of St. Christopher's and the West End of Nevis*. (1687) showing two houses with *carbet* influences on Nevis. [The British Library]. The house on the left possibly belonged to the Smith family; it had two round ends and was on an exposed site called 'Saddle Hill'. The house on the right was at Westbury and had only one round end, and stood on the crest of a hill. Note the small size of the window and door openings to minimize the entry of storm winds.



Figure 7.2(b). Detail of the *Map of Mountserrat*. 1673. showing Major Caines' house with one round end. [With permission of the John Carter Brown Library of Brown University]





Figure 7.2 (e). The Hermitage Great House on Nevis, which dates from circa 1700. [Hobson]. The house has a lofted porch or cross-gabled entry, earth-fast *lignum vitae* post foundations and vertical wood siding and shingles.

Figure 7.2 Stages of the Anglicization of the *carbet* into the 'three-room' type of planter house using images shown on contemporary maps and the extant Hermitage House.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the inhabitants had adopted the English practice of ordering the landscape and creating hierarchies of external space by demarcating boundaries. Low walls marked the boundaries between building compounds and the fields, and there is evidence of gardens with symmetrical plantings on the grounds of better establishments.

Until a spate of severe earthquakes, the inhabitants built their houses of stone, brick and timber. Up to 1672, wrote Sir William Stapleton, many of the houses in Montserrat were in stone, but following a dreadful earthquake on that island in 1672, there was a trend toward timber construction:

There was in Montserrat some stone buildings, but the earthquakes having thrown then all down they build with timber – altogether only the boyling houses for sugar which in part must be built of stone....only two churches ever built, and those demolished by the French, rebuilt by the Governor's direction on his arrival, but leveled with the ground by a terrible earthquake on Christmas Day 1672 and had the people been in the afternoon at church they had been knocked in the head. In some houses, persons were killed as in my own.<sup>9</sup>

It is possible that newcomers adhered to the current English fashion and preferred to erect houses and 'mansions' in brick and stone. In a severe earthquake during 1690, in both Nevis and Antigua, the houses and 'mansions' of masonry material collapsed during the first shocks; indeed it appears that the French governor's tower house was a casualty of this event because it was never referred to again. After several major earthquakes in the region, with a few exceptions, the affluent inhabitants of the islands built their houses of local timber on raised stone foundations to accommodate the sloping sites.

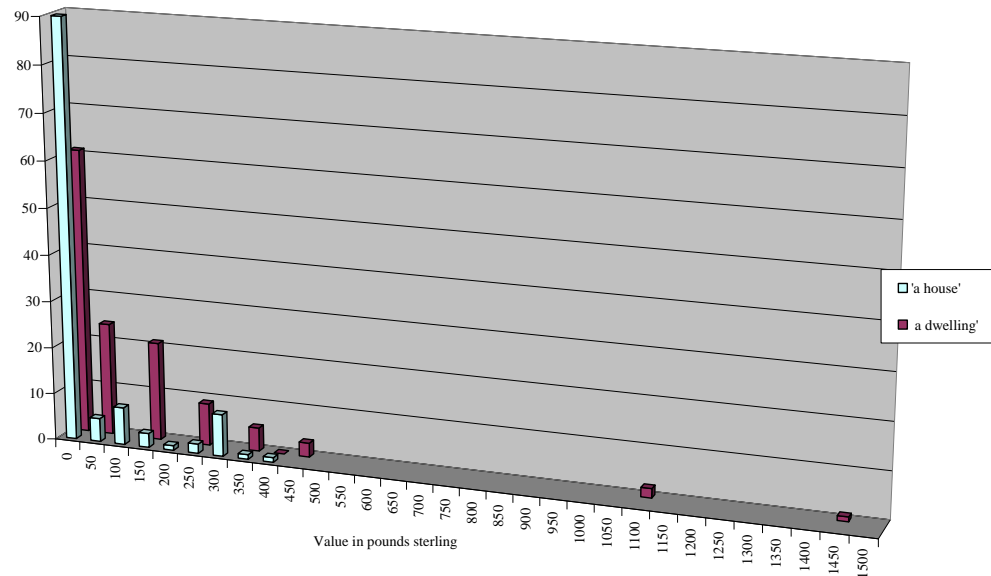
In the early eighteenth century, the buildings presented a wide range of quality of construction material, finish, value and furnishings, which was in keeping with the socio-economic structure of the region. [Table 7.1] The successors of the pioneer landowners controlled the fertile land; they planted sugar cane, processed and exported it, using Negro slave labor and they grew extremely wealthy. In 1706 on St. Christopher, the majority of the European population was small farmers producing cotton, indigo, cassava for feeding the slaves in the recently abandoned French quarter of Basseterre, subsistence farmers on marginal lands and artisans. By this time, the Negro population had risen to about half of the total population of the Leewards. Negro slavery existed in this period,

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<sup>9</sup> CO 153/2 folio 172 & 371. 1676.

but the structure of the slave society of the mid- and late-eighteenth century had not yet developed. There are no reliable figures for the Carib population.

**Table 7.1 Distribution of the Values of Residential Structures on St. Christopher in 1706**



Some eighty years after first settlement, there was at least one occupied tower house and a number of 'round-end', thatched, three-room planter houses on the plantations of the 'old inhabitant' families. However, the general trend among the planter class was towards a more polite and cultured lifestyle. In the better houses, the occupants described their three rooms with the terms 'hall' and 'chambers'. It appears that the spatial arrangement was formal and symmetrical with chambers on both sides of the hall, in an English 'double parlor' arrangement. In place of the earlier utilitarian brick floors, several of the more polite houses had paving stones or tiles in the hall and public areas of the house, and wood in the chambers. In some cases, the partition walls were full-height; a few houses had wainscot and paneling on the interior face of the walls. The householders extended the 'three room' arrangement to accommodate more specialized

functional areas with closets, lofts and sheds. They built detached structures called 'lodgings' and 'outchambers' for their guests in order to maintain privacy within the main house. These trends were current in cultivated circles in Britain at that time.

To proclaim their status and demonstrate their success and ability to entertain on a grand scale, the planters increasingly erected large detached kitchens and steward rooms in local fieldstone, and had an increasing number of outbuildings and traditional symbols of property-owning status on their plantations, pigeon houses, for example. Leading planters imported furniture in the latest styles with japanned finishes, inlaid work and cane seats; they expended great efforts on the family bed, the formal bed of the household, with glossy and figured hangings, bolsters and pillows. The formal bed was not for sleeping which took place either in a hammock, or in a simple bed of inferior wood. The planters aspired to a cultivated and polite lifestyle comparable to that in England where they educated their children; they purchased books, prints, writing desks, paintings, mirrors as well as wall sconces and candlesticks for lighting their evening entertainment.<sup>10</sup>

In the increasingly cultured society, there was evidence of an interest in novel house forms and innovative ideas. The room dimensions of Susanna Coles' house complied with the Golden Ratio; in addition, that house, and at least one other, was two rooms deep. Joseph Crisp's new house had an arched porch with column supports of a type first seen at the captain-general's house in Montserrat. A few families at the pinnacle of society displayed borrowings from the Spanish and Portuguese cultures such

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<sup>10</sup> See John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort. Sensibilities & Design in Early Modern Britain & Early America*. (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press., 2001). Chapter 4.

as balconies and ‘shades’ or verandas. The ‘shades’ or verandas were not a characteristic of the Leeward Islands in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; an enclosed or lofted porch was the general preference on large plantation houses.

The planter houses of wealthy families, like the Pinneys of Nevis (1698-1722) and those of Lady Matthew, Joseph Crisp Snr. and Thanvet of St. Christopher (1706), had completed the process of Anglicization of the *carbet*. Their residences sat on a stone foundation while retaining Carib construction technique of earth-fast posts of durable hardwoods:

A large dwelling house 60 foot long, 18 foot wide and 7 foot in ye wall plate. Divided into a Hall and 2 Chambers with a porch 14 foot square in ye front and underpinned all round with a stonewall. Ye ground timber of lignum vitae mastic and iron wood. Ye roof of choice square timber boarded and shingled all the said house floored underfoot with deal boards except the porch which was tiled. The sides and partitions boarded Linenwise and all the windows and doors made of choice red cedar boards...£350.<sup>11</sup>

Some thirty percent of the houses of St. Christopher were of the planter three-room type, but about 20% had four and more rooms, and their form and arrangements were atypical and sometimes singular. A number of the four-room type were single story and one room deep and had French Huguenot owners; there was an H- or E-type house and a two-room deep house. On Antigua, the most prestigious planter house, ‘Betties’ Hope’ of the Codrington family, had a structure of dressed local limestone, but on the other islands with plentiful volcanic fieldstone, the houses were of Caribbean hardwoods and local timber.

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<sup>11</sup> Gillard et al. Folio 70.



In 1706, artisans and small farmers on St. Christopher and probably all the islands, typically lived in a house of the 'two room' type. The 'two-room', 'hall and parlor' house was a type commonly used in England by modest rural workers and for small town dwellings with shops. In the Leeward Islands, the poorest householders built 'two-room' houses using a variety of materials like wattle, boards and stone perhaps in an accretive manner. On the other hand, several prominent merchant-planters developed an elegant form of the 'two-room' type as a merchant or planter's house in the nascent port towns. They refined the basic plan form by making the rooms of equal dimensions, and augmented the size of the house both horizontally, with closets, and vertically, with loft rooms and even a second floor. The majority of the 'shades' or verandas mentioned in records were attached to the merchant-planter town houses.

The practice of maintaining a house on the plantation and one in the town was not a practical necessity because many of the houses were within walking distance of each other. It was clearly a display of wealth and status, and it was a custom in England among hereditary European landholders and the rising class of gentry and successful merchants to maintain a house in the country and a fashionable one in London.

In 1726, twenty years after the destructive French Raid on Nevis and St. Christopher, the most noticeable change in the housing stock was the 'homogenization' of use of both the 'two-room' and 'three-room' house types. On St. Christopher, the inhabitants built both types in the town setting and on plantations. The 'two-room' house generally had a 'shed' or closet attached, and even leading planter families erected them. The new 'three-room' planter houses retained the single pile form, but pigeon houses and other symbols declared the owner's status. On Nevis, it appears that the merchants and

planters rebuilt their houses as before. The inhabitants persisted in building the better houses of timber and there is evidence of the existence of a multiplicity of utilitarian stone structures like freestanding ovens and water storage cisterns.

For most of the period of this study, the Irish comprised approximately half the population of the islands; the African population exceeded the European population in the early eighteenth century. This factor accounts in large part for the difficulty of identifying specific African contributions, if they existed at the time, to the architecture of the Leeward Islands in the early colonial period.

## 7.2 CONCLUSIONS

In the first century of English colonization of the Caribbean Leewards Islands (1624-1726), there was a significant degree of interaction and exchange between the Carib and British peoples. The study indicates the significant role of national culture and tradition, of familiar geometries and customary practices in the creation and configuration of a colonial architecture and landscape.

The architecture of the early colonial period in the Leeward Islands records the settlers' process of adaptation to the environmental constraints using Carib techniques and lore while steadfastly adhering to their customary practices. As the self-image of the leaders of the society changed from that of a tobacco farmer in a frontier tropical setting to successful early industrialist, so too did their concept of what would gain them

acceptance as being British. By the early eighteenth century, prominent merchants and planters had adopted the taste and customs of fashionable and polite English society.

The need for an identity as part of a larger body led the settlers to transform the unfamiliar tropical islands into something that could be recognized as British. With the increase in affluence and self-confidence, the English aesthetic asserted itself and became dominant, with the result that the Carib culture was visually absent in the later colonial landscapes. One concludes from the architecture that the pioneers and sugar planters emulated English society in their search for acceptance in “the British world”.

The study suggest that there is a need to recognize the colonial period in the Americas as being multi-cultural and, to use Edward Braithwaite’s words, one of “interaction, exchange and creativity”.<sup>12</sup> It indicates that the need is not merely to “recover the histories of those peoples – Amerindian, Africans and people of mixed race – whose stories had largely been neglected”<sup>13</sup>, but to recover the reality of the Colonial past, to revisit the history and records of a wide Colonial America without Eurocentric perceptions.

The findings of this study explain in large part the ‘silence’ in literature about the architecture of the first English colonies in the tropical Americas. They also ‘dovetail’ with Mulcahy’s discussions of , *inter alia*, the long, low structures of West Indian buildings, the existence of both masonry and a timber hurricane ‘houses’, the European

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<sup>12</sup> Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground. Archaeology and Early African America, 1650-1800* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 1992).xli.

<sup>13</sup> Greene. 239.

and Carib types of structure, and what can be seen as the integration of the two, the round ‘storm towers’ of the South Carolina of the early eighteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

The major findings of this study coalesce around the derivation of house type and building practices of the ‘three-room’ planter house type of the wider Caribbean region, the detached kitchen arrangement and the presence or absence of galleries, verandas and balconies in the architecture of the Leewards. The study showed convincingly that buried or earth-fast post construction was not a cheap and ‘impermanent’ technique, but was the preference of the elite and a sign of commitment to locale

#### 7.2.1. The ‘three-room’ planter house type of the Caribbean regions.

The Leewards three-room planter house of the early eighteenth century was the integration of the structural envelope of a Carib *carbet* structure, with the internal arrangement of a traditional farm or manor house in the British Isles. Hans Sloane (1688), Jay D. Edwards and Christophe Charlery recorded a similar house type in the former Spanish and French colonies of the wider Caribbean in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. On the other hand, Mark Reinberger noted that “it is surprising that the type has so few occurrences in American colonial architecture”.<sup>15</sup> [Read ‘America’ as the original English colonies of the North American mainland]. Reinberger found this peculiar because the three-cell house was one of the most important post-medieval house types in Britain. He noted that the owners of the few examples identified had belonged to

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<sup>14</sup> Matthew Mulcahy, *Hurricanes and Society in the British Greater Caribbean, 1624-1783* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> Mark Reinberger, "Graeme Park and the Three-cell Plan. A lost type in Colonial architecture.," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, no. IV (1991). 151.

the early colonial elite that had been born and raised in Great Britain; the earliest house of the sample dated from circa 1700.

It is most likely that the occurrence of the ‘three-cell’ form is related to climatic conditions. It was not economical to heat a single pile house in the harsh winter of the northern colonies, whereas the form lent itself to the levels of ventilation and air movement essential for comfort in a humid tropical zone. This suggests that the adoption of the *carbet* as a permanent form of shelter by the settlers took place after a period of familiarization with tropical conditions and was not simply a mark of ‘going native’ in an instant. The house form had the additional benefits of being resilient in earthquakes and providing protection during hurricanes.

Reinberger’s article inadvertently answered the question about why settlers would adopt a three-room and not a two-room interior for the planter house when he wrote “at the simplest level of analysis, the three-cell plan was extremely common in England for rural houses of the yeomanry and lower aristocracy in the seventeenth century”.<sup>16</sup> The first English settlers of the Leewards, who seized large tracts of fertile land for tobacco planting, aspired to live in an arrangement associated with their class and aspirations. It is only logical that they introduced the three-cell plan of the manors and farmhouses of their origins.

The widespread occurrence in the former French and Spanish coastal colonies of the Caribbean of rural houses similar to the planter houses of the Leewards raises a question about the origin of the arrangement. When did it first appear? Did the concept develop and diffuse from Spanish colonies to the other regions? Alternatively, did the

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 150.

type evolve independently? Jay D. Edwards hypothesized that the “Spanish plan houses” of Louisiana with a symmetrical three-room base were a vernacular form of the tri-partite arrangement of Diego Colon’s palace in Santo Domingo (1510).<sup>17</sup> He drew attention to the prevalence of surrounding verandas in the Louisiana houses in the early 1700s and the *cabinets* on them, which he interpreted as being vestiges of those of Colon’s Venetian-influenced palace. Christopher Charlery identified a form similar to the Louisiana “Spanish plan” houses in the French Caribbean colonies; they appeared, in the early eighteenth century, in the Guianas and up the West Indian island chain to Haiti.<sup>18</sup> The findings of this study of British colonial houses clarify one aspect of the occurrence.

There is a great probability that Amerindians in the Caribbean region had a ‘low’ and long house type, a ‘longhouse’, prior to first contact with Europeans. The various incoming peoples recognized the qualities of the longhouse or *carbet* in terms of ventilation, performance in earthquakes and the ease of repair after hurricanes. They modified these longhouse structures according to their national customs and practices. Countries in North-west Europe including the British Isles and France had a three-room farmhouse custom, which accounts for the similarity of their base module. The remaining puzzle is the origin of the encircling verandas or galleries of the French. That will require an independent study.

The common threads in the early history of Europeans in the Caribbean were the Amerindians, European buccaneers, heat, hurricanes and/or earthquakes. When

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<sup>17</sup> Edwards.173.

<sup>18</sup> Charlery.

investigating the routes of diffusion of cultural material, one has to take account of the buccaneers and traders who became familiar with the features of the Amerindian structures. *Los corsairos luternos* were predominantly from North-west Europe. One can postulate that the generic three-room *carbet* house was forged in the interaction and exchange of the Amerindians and Europeans, perhaps even before first official settlements.

The British houses in the Leewards evinced the several stages of the process of syncretism of the Carib and British building practices. Over time, the settlers modified the structural envelope to conform to their remembered British vernacular aesthetic, with the result that the settlers incorporated symmetry and the central entry porch features of prosperous post medieval country houses. Whereas, it appears, the French adopted encircling verandas. The anomaly is Sloane's description of former Spanish dwellings in Jamaica in the late 1680s<sup>19</sup>. Others have resolved the issue and advanced the reasonable theory that the former Spanish structures had been Anglicized by the addition of an English porch in the thirty years after the capture of the island by the British, which preceded Sloane's visit.

The Europeans adopted at least three important construction techniques of the *carbet*. The most obvious characteristic, which the travelers and governors of the period noted, was the low appearance of the settlers' houses, which like Sir William Stapleton,

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<sup>19</sup> Sir Hans Sloane, *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the herbs and trees, four-footed beasts, fish, reptiles, &c of the last of those islands; to which is prefixed an introduction, wherein is an account of the inhabitants, air, waters, diseases, trade, &c. of that place, with some relations concerning the neighbouring continent, and islands of America. Illustrated with figures of the things described, which have not been heretofore engraved; in large copperplate - big as the life*, 2 vols. (London: Printed by B.M. for the author, 1707-1725).

they claimed was “due to the hurricanes”. “Lowness”, or a single story profile, for the settlers’ farmhouses was at odds with the English yeoman penchant for increasing height within a compact footprint. However, the impression of ‘lowness’ could also be associated with the ‘hip-like’ roof of the ‘round end’ of the *carbet*, which deflected winds around the structure. It would follow that the high incidence of hip roof construction in the mid-eighteenth century Caribbean was the result of the integration of the Carib ‘round roof’ techniques with Georgian style symmetry.

Another technique that the settlers adopted by the early eighteenth century was the use of ridgepoles in the roofs to support and brace the rafters; however, this never fully obliterated the English paired rafter system in the Leewards, variants of which are extant to this day. There is no indication in this study of how the Caribs made connections; they may have used vines.

A third characteristic was the planting of structural posts several feet into the earth. It was a simple method of producing a firm foundation by using a practice of which the Europeans had prior knowledge. However, the length of buried post of five or more feet and the selection of timber for the structure depended on Carib lore. This study found that earth-fast post house construction was a feature of the better houses, and primarily the plantation residences. The Caribbean hardwood material for the buried posts was costly, but the colonists recognized that only hardwoods resistant to worms and moisture could last in the buried state. When the settlers had depleted the virgin forest stands in the Leewards, the wealthy inhabitants took the expensive alternative of importing their supplies from other islands.



This finding is in keeping with Graham's perspective, drawn from archaeological evidence, that the 'Virginia House' was a technological solution of the New World that "married the simplicity and low cost of slight framing with the robustness of the box frame".<sup>20</sup> He found that simultaneous with the emergence of the Virginia House terminology was a doubling in the occurrence of earth-fast post construction with neatly aligned posts, and a substantial number had clapboard siding. The implication is that the mainland settlers adopted the planted post techniques, which did not require skilled labor, to found the rigid framework needed for good quality finishes.

In summary, it is quite probable that the *carbet* farmhouses recommended themselves as a more comfortable alternative to tower houses in the earliest days of settlement. The tower houses were a response to the frontier situation and provided the outlook to sea that was vital for security and for their trading activities. The stone towers did provide a secure haven during hurricanes, but in fine weather they must have been hot. In addition, they required considerable resources of labor, which were always in short supply. The ease of repair of the *carbet* after hurricanes and its resilience to earthquake stresses, along with its cool interior, recommended that form for use on the exposed sites of the islands. Similar to the Chesapeake condition, the *carbet* did not require skilled labor.

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<sup>20</sup> Willie Graham et al., "Adaptation and Innovation: Archaeological and Architectural Perspectives on the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake," *William and Mary Quarterly 3rd Series* LXIV, no. 3 (2007). 465-470.

### 7.2.2. The Detached Kitchen Arrangement.

The detached kitchen arrangement evolved prior to 1670 in the Leewards. The separation resolved several practical and cultural issues that predated widespread Negro slavery. This finding corroborates new perspectives on the issue in the mainland British colonies by Willie Graham and colleagues.<sup>21</sup> They found that the social need to redefine the boundaries between master and servant in the main houses of Virginia and Maryland, in seventeenth century, was driven by broad transatlantic trends and not by Negro slavery. They pointed out that when the separation of the kitchen first occurred, there were few slaves in those colonies, and that at the same time houses on the other side of the Atlantic were becoming more socially restrictive. In Western Europe, the traditional relationship between the manor house and servants had broken down, and farmers had even started to hire day laborers for financial reasons.

In addition there was the intellectual satisfaction of complying with classical and Palladian ideals and, in the Leewards, there were practical reasons for the detachment. The adoption of the *carbet* envelope for shelter by Europeans had advanced the distancing of cooking activities from the main house. It would have been a fire hazard to roast the meats preferred by Europeans in the low thatched *carbet* structures.<sup>22</sup> Indeed the precursors of the settlers, the pirates in the West Indies, who may have lived in similar structures, used to prepare their 'jerked' and *boucan* meats on open fires.<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 520.

<sup>22</sup> Europeans introduced horses, cows, pigs, goats and sheep to the Caribbean islands.

<sup>23</sup> It is quite possible that the Caribs cooked fish, 'agouti' and the whelks, that they so enjoyed, in the *carbets*, but it is unlikely that they used the large cooking pots in the paintings of the *Drake Manuscript*. The paintings were clearly a Europeans interpretation of what he saw, heard or remembered.

removal of cooking activities from the planter house did have the added advantage of extricating the much feared Irish from the family domain.<sup>24</sup> [See section 1.4].

### 7.2.3 Galleries, Verandas and ‘Shades’.

Up to the early eighteenth century, a central entry porch was an identifying feature of the larger British houses, and galleries and verandas were not characteristics of the architecture of the Leeward colonies. Mulcahy links the absence of Spanish influence on the British buildings to an aesthetic distaste for Spanish forms.<sup>25</sup> However, the lack of galleries and verandas in the Leewards is better explained by the prevalence of hurricanes and the cooling trade winds on the very small islands. Most of the few-recorded occurrences of ‘shades’ were in the port towns or low-lying areas and were on the houses of the wealthiest families, though it is entirely possible that persons did erect makeshift ‘shades’ for outdoor work. The ‘shade’ or veranda structure, is highly susceptible to uplift and damage during hurricanes. This accounts in part for the separation of structures evident at Philip Verchild’s house in Sandy Point<sup>26</sup>, which treated the ‘shade’ as a sacrificial element. The pattern of locating single pile planter houses on elevated sites allowed the houses to better enjoy cooling breezes, but exposed the structures to high levels of damage from storm winds.<sup>27</sup> One concludes that by a process of trial and

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<sup>24</sup> Beckles.

<sup>25</sup> Mulcahy. 122.

<sup>26</sup> “By one house in the town of Old Road New England timber with one room over boarded and shingled 30 foot long & 18 foot wide with one shade and ye second 14 foot long & 8 foot wide and one shade behind the house the whole length which was boarded underfoot (as also on the lower rooms) both shades of mastick and yellow sandor & ye whole building well boarded and shingled at...£250”. Gillard et al. 314A.

<sup>27</sup> The survival of the Hermitage House on Nevis can be accounted for by the peculiarity of its location in a protected spot. This was observed following the destructive hurricane of 1989 with wind gusts of 150 mph and higher when the only damage was loss of a coat of paint.

error, the Leeward Island inhabitants had discounted the benefit of having the fragile feature on their plantation houses; the enclosed porch was more resilient. On the other hand, a few prominent persons could afford to offset the fragile feature against the thermal and social improvements of incorporating ‘shades’ in the towns. The towns were ports and were humid because of the proximity to the ocean and the low degree of air movement during both normal days and storms.

#### 7.2.4 The Persistence of Timber House Construction

The predominance of timber house construction by the Leewards’ elite, in light of the hazards posed by the combustible cane fields, suggests the play of cultural and intellectual forces in the decision-making. A similar trend in the North American colonies appears to support this finding for after the mid-seventeenth century only a relatively small number of rich men built brick houses in those colonies, and the surge in brick construction occurred after the 1720’s.<sup>28</sup>

Low hardwood timber structures resisted earthquakes and, in balance, would have seemed the most reliable shelter in the late seventeenth century. Contemporary writers in the Leeward Islands like Sir William Stapleton in 1676 had associated the “lowness” and preference for timber houses with earthquakes. In addition, the reports by other colonial governors<sup>29</sup> and writers of the ilk of John Oldmixon had referred to the collapse of masonry houses in Antigua and Nevis in the severe earthquake of 1690. Oldmixon’s much later account told in vivid language how the earthquake had leveled the masonry

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<sup>28</sup> Graham et al. 521.

<sup>29</sup> The Hon. J.W. Fortescue, ed., *Calendar of State Papers. Colonial Series. America and West Indies. 1689-1692*. (Burlington, Ontario.: TannerRitchie Publishing & The University of St Andrews, 2004). 278.

houses in an instant.<sup>30</sup> In the Atlantic world of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was close contact between the British colonies in the Americas. One can presume that the violent earthquakes of the Leewards and the destruction of the brick built town of Port Royal in 1692 reinforced a traditional preference for timber house construction in the British American colonies, if only for a few years.

#### 7.2.5. The Peculiar Silence in Literature about the Leeward Island Houses.

One issue that has been fully resolved by this study is the reason for the silence in literature about the architecture of the early British settlers in the Leeward Islands. The findings on the range of house types during the first century of settlement begin to explain the reticence on the issue. Mulcahy construed comments by English travelers to mean that the colonists considered the Carib forms too ‘primitive’ to imitate as they went about creating their new settlements.<sup>31</sup> However, the evidence suggests that this is just what the more successful early colonists did. The settlers imitated the Carib techniques, and it was a winning strategy. Clearly, the transitional aesthetic of the colonists’ houses would not commend their acceptance in fashionable English society, so that knowledge

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<sup>30</sup> Mr. John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America; containing the history of the discovery, settlement, progress, and state of the British colonies on the continent and Islands of America.*, Second edition, Corrected and Amended 1741 with the continuation of the history and the variation in the state and trade of those colonies, from the year 1710 to the present time; including remarks, and the most feasible and useful methods for their improvement and security. ed., 2 vols., vol. II, Reprints of economic classics (New York: Augustus M. Kelley., 1741 ). Vol. II 253: “About 5 o’clock...began a mighty Earthquake, with so much Violence, that almost all the Houses in Charlestown, which were of Brick or Stone, were in an Instant levell’d with the Ground , and those built of Timber shook....’Tis usual almost at every House in this island to have a large Cistern to contain the Rain Water, of about 9 or 10 Foot deep, and 15 or 20 Foot Diameter; several of which, with the Violence of the Earthquake, threw out the Water 8 or 10 Foot high.”

<sup>31</sup> Mulcahy. 119-127.

about the house forms of the settlers, during the period when they started to create wealth for themselves and Britain, has been suppressed.

### 7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

This study has revealed a number of common ‘threads’ or themes in the architecture of the American colonial world that, on investigation, could provide new perspectives on the nature of early colonialism in the Americas, on the process of adaptation to new conditions, on the contribution of the Amerindians to the survival of the settlers, and on the diffusion and integration of cultural material.

A preliminary examination of literature on the development of architecture in the Spanish American colonies indicates a similar trajectory to that of the British Leewards. Further investigation of literature about Spanish colonial architecture may corroborate and refine the processes of adaptation, of interaction, exchange and creativity in the domestic architecture of the Americas post-1492. Research in the Spanish Archives could produce new information on the houses of the British colonies in the early colonial period.

There are still significant resources of archival material about the early British architecture of the Americas that has not been tapped. Scholars have asserted “Time, war, weather and man have deprived us of essential materials... [about] The Beginnings of the American People”<sup>32</sup>, when referring to the British Caribbean. This study and

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<sup>32</sup> Carl Bridenbaugh and Roberta Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond The Line. The English in the Caribbean 1624-1690* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972). Vii.

others are indicating that adequate material is extant to reveal the reality of that early period, and these studies need to be pursued to gain a fuller understanding of the action of European colonization on the indigenous people and landscape.

Comparative studies of the emergence or introduction of significant architectural features - galleries or shades, hipped roofs and round-ended hurricane structures - in disparate regions may indicate the origin and pattern of diffusion of architectural features. Such studies will draw attention to the contribution of indigenous people.

In these studies, it is important to recognize that the Caribbean and North American colonies did not develop in isolation; trading and family ties closely connected them to each other and to Britain. The possibility exists that features and practices may have originated in the American colonies and been introduced from there to Britain. Archival materials indicate the migration of substantial numbers of Leeward Islanders to Virginia. What are the implications for the architecture on the mainland? The exile of thousands of French persons from French St. Christopher to S. Domingue in 1690 and 1702 suggests how Carib features may have diffused to the Greater Antilles. Similarly, how did the exodus of Leeward Island inhabitants to Jamaica affect the architecture?

In the context of the Leewards, this study has merely delineated the architecture in the first century. More in depth studies of issues like construction materials, or of resources like the Archives of Antigua and Barbuda, will expand on the outline findings of this study. This will feed back into a wider understanding of adaptation, interaction and creativity in the early colonial world.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A – REPORT ON MAJOR ARCHIVES VISITED.

This appendix lists the major archives and mentions some of the more valuable items located.

### NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ST. KITTS, Basseterre, St. Kitts.

The cramped offices of the National Archives of St. Kitts are a stark contrast to the richness of the collection of rare manuscripts, official documents of the island, and microfilm copies of material in overseas repositories. This collection of documents produced the most extensive body of information used in this study. The volume of information in the 1707/8 Commission Report made it essential to obtain a full photocopy for examination instead of attempting to transcribe it. Two exceptional items from these holdings used in this study are:

- the original *St. Christopher's Deed Book. 1698-1701*<sup>1</sup>; and,
- a *Copy of Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty's Leeward Caribbean Islands in America & Gilbert Fleming and Edward Mann, Esq. for disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the island of St. Christopher's formerly belonging to the French. 1726;* to date, the original of this document has not been located in the Colonial State Papers.

Other valuable holdings are the microfilm copies of:

- *Calendars of State papers. Colonial Series (1574-1738)* .
- *Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed (1707/8)*, the original of which is in the National Archives of Britain;
- the St. Christopher Register of Deeds (1727-29) and St. Christopher Deed Book. (1732 -1734);
- *Microfilm* from the *Archives Nationales (France)* starting in 1639; and,
- a copy of the map by Buor, Pierre. "*Plan Geometral de l'Ile de St. Christophe presente a sa Maieste.*" *St. Christopher's, ca 1700.*

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<sup>1</sup> Note: It had previously been previously been accepted that all public records were destroyed in the 1706 French raid.

The *1707/8 Commission Report*<sup>2</sup> was a result of a Crown Commission appointed to record and estimate the value of the inhabitant's losses from the French Raid of 1706<sup>3</sup>. The Report, which was the first step towards the payment of reparations, is an itemized record, 695 folios long, with sterling estimates of the losses of 335 individuals and partnerships; each claimant swore to the veracity of their claims and signed the document. The Commissioners did reduce the value of several claims. The losses were valued at £123, 174 2s 9d sterling. However, when Parliament approved compensation, in 1711, it was to one-third of the value plus 6% interest per annum.. The loss of greatest value was the slaves, plantation stores, sugar, but the remaining report has brief descriptions of the nearly 500 buildings including mills, dwellings and other structures, that were burnt; it is an invaluable source of contemporary information about the British in their earliest tropical colonies. The larger and more valuable section of the Commission Report, which concerns the losses in Nevis, cannot be located.

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) confirmed that when the English drove the French out of St. Christophe, in 1702, it was for the last time. However, the Crown took no action on the distribution of the land until 1726. At which time, George II and his Council decided to sell the lands by auction in parcels of no more than 200 acres and appointed a commission to undertake the sale. The Commissioners who compiled the *Journal of the proceedings for disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the Island of St. Christopher's formerly belonging to the French*<sup>4</sup> were directed that persons in possession of properties were to be first given the option to buy them. The result was that these people submitted their bids or claims along with statements of the structures, plantings and improvements on the land. These statements comprise a fifty folio section of the Report and provide a volume of short, incomplete descriptions about the new or adapted buildings of the previous twenty years.

The text and summaries of the Calendars of State Papers are useful in themselves, but because the original documents were re-catalogued several times, the CSPC citations serve as approximate orientation points in the files in the National Archives of Britain.

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<sup>2</sup> George Gillard et al., "Report of the Commission to inquire into losses sustained by the Inhabitants of St. Kitts and Nevis during the French invasion of 1705/6. Claims allowed.," in *Colonial State Papers. National Archives. Britain* (London: 1707/8).

<sup>3</sup> See Page 16 of the Introduction and Appendix 1.

<sup>4</sup> Hon. William Matthew, Gilbert Fleming, and Edward Esq. Mann, "Copy of Journal of the Proceedings of the Hon. William Matthew, Lt. General of His Majesty's Leeward Caribbean Islands in America & Gilbert Fleming and Edward Mann, Esq. for disposing of His Majesty's Lands in the island of St. Christopher's formerly belonging to the French.," in *Archive of St. Kitts* (Basseterre.: 1726).

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF BRITAIN, Kew, London, England.

Holdings are a collection, since the medieval period, of documents produced by the King, State and their officers in legal, trade and religious courts of Britain and correspondence with her colonies. Its advanced technology system, for searching, ordering and copying documents, delivers boxes of faded letters from civil suits of 300 years ago; but there is no consistent catalogue for the individual pieces of the early *State Papers. Colonial Series*, only dates and brief references to boxes of tightly bound letters and thick files. Material examined include:

- the full original text of a number of letters, that are abbreviated in the *CSPC*.
- Laws of the Leewards, Minutes of the Houses of Assembly, correspondence, evidentiary papers of civil suits of the Leewards for whatever information they contain about towns, building practices, organization of the colonies, imports, exports, prohibitions or other subject.
- A search in the Map collection did not produce a map similar to the *Map of Mountserrat. 1673* for another island, but there were military maps of the period with small buildings.
- The probate registry of the wills of seamen, of those with properties overseas or in more than one archdiocese or in excess of £5 value, fell under the Prerogative Court of Canterbury until 1858<sup>5</sup>. Wills of inhabitants of the islands are available, but the inventories of assets sought could not be located.

Without a doubt there are vast amounts of untapped information in these Archives. These forays yielded a multiplicity of small pieces of information, images of small military buildings, but no detailed description of domestic buildings. No part of the Nevis claims of the 1707/8 Commission Report could be located except letters giving power of attorney to receive payments or death notices and receipts for the Nevisian claims.

BRITISH LIBRARY, Euston, London, UK.

The British Library's extensive holdings of seventeenth and eighteenth century material include rare books, manuscripts, tracts, letters and maps, produced by private individuals, as well as a number of official documents. The intention of these visits was to locate letters and manuscripts from residents in the Leewards describing the houses and life style. The several letters located listed the structures of working

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<sup>5</sup> Karen Grannum and Nigel Taylor, *Wills and Other Probate Records. A practical guide to researching your ancestors' last documents*. (London: the National Archives, 2004). 25.

plantations, described hurricanes and their effects, with little detail and no illustrations. The Map collection has several maps of the Leewards; they have all been copied and poor reproductions are available in other collections. Particularly useful was to be able to peruse an original of Sir Hans Sloane's *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica*,<sup>6</sup> with his insightful comments about the Leewards. There was Jean Barbot's *Journal du Voyage de Guinee, Cayenne et Iles Antilles de l'Amerique. 1678-1679*.<sup>7</sup> with illustrations of slave factories in West Africa and fortifications in the French Caribbean, as well as comments about the implications of the English enmity for the Caribs; Langford's tract about the 1666 hurricane in the Leewards; letters from Nevis; and, a broadsheet *To the Honorable Commons in Parliament Assembled. The Case of the Poor distressed planters and other inhabitants of the islands of Nevis & St. Christopher's in America*<sup>8</sup> demonstrated the wide publicity given to the event.

#### THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, St Johns, Antigua.

The National Archives of Antigua holds the official and legal documents of the island, the original Codrington Family Papers and a microfilm version of them. These visits had limited success for this institution operates as a depository or storage facility, and not as a source of original information. The Director was adamant that there was no architectural information in the Archives, but that a visit to the National Archives of Britain was the only chance of finding information. The copy of the Codrington Papers catalogue is kept behind the front desk, but access was permitted to some rolls of the microfilm, which contained valuable information about the architecture of Antigua. There are no facilities to print the microfilm onsite, nor any willingness to provide copies of the survey maps of the originals or microfilm. Later visits were less fruitful for the microfilm rolls requested could not be accessed.

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<sup>6</sup> Sir Hans Sloane, *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the herbs and trees, four-footed beasts, fish, reptiles, &c of the last of those islands; to which is prefixed an introduction, wherein is an account of the inhabitants, air, waters, diseases, trade, &c. of that place, with some relations concerning the neighbouring continent, and islands of America. Illustrated with figures of the things described, which have not been heretofore engraved; in large copperplate - big as the life*, 2 vols. (London: Printed by B.M. for the author, 1707-1725).

<sup>7</sup> Jean Barbot, "Journal du Voyage de Guinee, Cayenne et Iles Antilles de l'Amerique.," in *Add. 28,788. British Library* (London: 1678-1679).

<sup>8</sup> "To the Honorable Commons in Parliament Assembled. The Case of the Poor distressed planters and other inhabitants of the islands of Nevis & St. Christophers in America.," in *CUP. British Library* (London: 1709).

## **APPENDIX B - REPORT ON MINOR ARCHIVES VISITED.**

This appendix lists most of the minor archives visited with items of particular relevance, and is not comprehensive. The selection included the Special Collections of university libraries where Leeward Island families deposited their papers. Based on accessibility, a period of four days allocated to each depository, this was quite adequate for the more fruitful visits. The importance of inventories was apparent, and that any chance of locating Nevisian claims of 1707/8 lay with these collections. Nevis was the richest of the Leeward Islands up to the French Raid of 1706.

### **BEINECKE LESSER ANTILLES COLLECTION, HAMILTON COLLEGE, Clinton, NY.**

This collection of books, maps, manuscripts, prints, and drawings from the Lesser Antilles of the period 1521 to 1860 is so extensive that a catalogue was prepared and published in hard and on-line copy. A large proportion of the seventeenth century material belonged to Christopher Jeaffreson, a property-holder, in St. Christopher and son of one of the first settlers. His account books detail the sales of materials and products and mention small building contracts. There is an inventory of his house and contents taken after his departure in 1682, agreements for rental of the property and correspondence with personalities known from other evidence. The 1819 copy of the survey map of his property in 1682, and other deeds shed new light on the reality of absentee property ownership. Other parts of the collection included documents related to St. Kitts. The staff of Special Collections is pleasant and helpful and reproductions are available.

### **PINNEY FAMILY PAPERS, Bristol University, Bristol, UK**

The Pinney family continues to deposit the family papers in this repository, so the collection is large and only a small section relates to Nevis and the Leewards where Azariah laid the foundation of the family fortune in the late seventeenth century. The catalogued material that is relevant to this study requires at least two days for examination. There are letter books, property deeds and account books that

build up an image of life and customs on the island; unfortunately, the drawing listed as West Indian is of India.

One mission of this visit was to locate copies of the Nevis Claims of 1707/8 that rumor had it were in Bristol. Under pressure, a Bristol resident and avid researcher of the Pinney Papers, David Small, suggested that the boxes of damaged papers might be of interest. The three boxes of damaged papers, which are not mentioned in the hand-lists, contained copies and drafts of correspondence issued by Pinney, his partner Merriweather and successors including three of the Nevis Claims of 1707/8, and, inventories of houses taken at different times for various reasons. These items are not catalogued or numbered so that there is some difficulty in referencing this material. This rare material, concerning the lives and not the economics of the early colonial period, is disintegrating into dust.

#### SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, Manchester University, Manchester, UK.

This collection houses part of the Stapleton family manuscripts, the other section is in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. Resources precluded a visit to Wales, and may be the reasons why the 'finds' were not substantial, only corroborative. Nevertheless, another Nevis Claim of 1707/8 is in this collection. The tight security surrounding the facility does not diminish access to the Treasurer's accounts of Montserrat (1672-80), the Census of the Leewards in 1678, family letters and property deeds of the collection.

#### CARTER BROWN LIBRARY, Brown University, Providence, RI.

A low-resolution digital copy of the original *1673 Map of Mountserratt* and a broadsheet were obtained from the Special Collections. For security, the catalogues of Special Collections are not available on-line, hence the value of bibliographies in the works of other researchers.

#### LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, Washington, D.C.

Examination of the Leeward Islands map collection took two days. A substantial number were copies of maps in other repositories.



#### TRUSTS IN THE LEEWARDS.

The success of the trusts and museums in the Leeward Islands has been to encourage and promote interest in the natural environment, the culture and history of the island. The general emphasis of the historic collections is rare books, photographs and post card collections; all these organizations hold photocopied sheets of articles or documents that residents found abroad.

#### THE MONTSERRAT NATIONAL TRUST, Salem, Montserrat.

Here, there is an excellent photograph collection; manuscripts by J.A. George Irish, *Alliouanga in Focus* (1973); and, T. Savage English's *Records of Montserrat* (1930). The Trust is a significant resource in absence of original records of historic information. Very helpful and gracious staff led by the director Lady Fergus. One has to commend this brave non-governmental organization (NGO) for struggling on cheerfully in spite of the erupting volcano.

#### PUBLIC LIBRARY, Brades, Montserrat.

The Montserrat Library holds the; scholarly and popular publications about Montserrat usually refer to the *Records*. Other holdings are the old journal article of Aubrey Gwynn's *Documents relating to the Irish in Montserrat*<sup>9</sup>, M.G. Laws *The Journal of a West Indian Proprietor*. London. (1834) and, several extracts from the *Colonial State Papers* and Oliver's *Caribbeana*<sup>10</sup> deposited by interested persons. Photocopying facilities are on-site.

#### REGISTRY OF THE SUPREME COURT, Brades, Montserrat.

Due to the loss of the capital town, Plymouth, buried under volcanic detritus, the Supreme Court Registry is housed in trailers. The earliest records held on site date from the late nineteenth century; the location of the other records is uncertain.

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<sup>9</sup> Aubrey Gwynn, "Documents relating to the Irish in Montserrat," *Analecta Hibernica* 4 (1932).

<sup>10</sup> Vere Langford Oliver MRCS, ed., *Caribbeana being miscellaneous papers relating to the History, Geneology, Topography and Antiquities of the British West Indies*, vol. 1 & 2 (London: Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, 1916).

MUSEUM OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, Old Court House, St. Johns, Antigua.

The holdings of dissertations, maps, reproductions and rare books, including Oliver's *The History of the Island of Antigua*<sup>11</sup>, provide excellent secondary sources of information about the island, in the period of this study. There is a useful photograph and postcard collection that includes several buildings that are now lost; and, the staff will scan small items for researchers. Unfortunately, the Museum is unable to provide copies of larger volumes like the *Extracts from the Codrington Papers*<sup>12</sup> with the surveys of Betty's Hope Plantation.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS OF THE SUPREME COURT, Charlestown, Nevis.

The recent photographic copy of the Nevis Common Records (1728-1740)<sup>13</sup> shows several entries that pre-date 1728. Property deeds of the time did not generally include survey plans as they did in Jamaica<sup>14</sup>; the buildings and features on the sites are typically named in a pattern of "messuages, edifices, Buildings, cattle & mills, Cafes, coppers, stills, worms... ponds, gardens, tenements, mountain lands..."<sup>15</sup>. Nevertheless, a number were more specific and served to corroborate other evidence; the probate inventories located yielded little new evidence. The Deed books predating 1725 are now too fragile to be handled.

NEVIS HISTORICAL AND CONSERVATION SOCIETY, Bath, Nevis.

The library of this well-organized NGO holds rare books, PhD dissertations, a survey of historic structures, an extensive photograph collection that is indexed, audiotapes of visitors to sites now lost, maps, articles and the usual collection of extracts from the *Colonial State Papers*. Of particular interest are: *Laws of Nevis. 1680-1773.*; Machling's "Protected Interests? The fortifications of Nevis, West Indies, from the 17th century to the present day. (2003); Pares, Richard. *A West-India Fortune (1950)*; Terrell's *The Historical Archaeology of the 17th and 18th century Jewish community of Nevis, British West Indies*

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Foundation Devonian, ed., *Extracts from the Codrington Papers pertaining to the family archives with its plantations in Antigua and other islands in the West Indies during the period 1649-1924*. (Calgary, Canada: 1988).

<sup>13</sup> "Nevis Courthouse Records: Common Records,," (Photographic copy made for the Nevis Courthouse in March 2005 by Nevis Heritage Project, the University of Southampton England with the support of the Bristol Record Society, Bristol, England., 1728-1740).

<sup>14</sup> James Robertson, "Jamaican Architecture before Georgian," *Winterthur Portfolio* 36, no. 2/3 (2001):.

<sup>15</sup> "St. Christopher's Deed Book," in *St. Kitts Archives* (Basseterre: 1698-1701).

(2000); Smith's *A Natural History of Nevis* (1745)<sup>16</sup>. Reproduction facilities are on-site for researchers. The helpful staff has practice in assisting visiting researchers.

ST. CHRISTOPHER HERITAGE SOCIETY, Basseterre, St. Kitts.

In the pattern of the NGO's of the other islands, the Heritage Society has a collection of rare books, as Jeaffreson's *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century from Papers (AD 1676-1686)*, hard-to-find relevant journal articles, and an excellent photograph collection that includes recent surveys of historic buildings. The early visits were invaluable as the photographs confirmed traits revealed in other materials. The collection of historic photographs is yet to be indexed, and is no longer available for perusal.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS OF THE SUPREME COURT, Basseterre, St. Kitts.

Investigations confirmed the practice seen in the Nevis Registry that property deeds may name buildings on a site, but do not describe them in any detail. Nevertheless, a chain of title search on a selected site does produce some information by a process of accumulation.

Several documents of interest, that had been identified using the ARCHON on-line catalogue of British Archives, were ordered from Bedfordshire and Luton Archives, Bristol Records office, Gloucestershire Records Office, the Somerset Archives, the Nottinghamshire Archives, Surrey History Centre, Lincolnshire Archives, West Yorkshire Archives, Herefordshire Archives, and Cambridge University Archives. This is not an efficient method of obtaining material, because items of value to this study may not be catalogued, or are listed under larger islands, or considered of little interest now that the British Empire has collapsed. The Interlibrary Loan Department of the Georgia Institute of Technology was a great assistance in this effort. The material located was corroboratory, rather than revealing new evidence.

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<sup>16</sup> Rev Mr. William Smith, *A Natural History of Nevis and the rest of the English Leeward Charibee islands in America*. (Cambridge: J. Bentham, printer to the University., 1745).

## APPENDIX C - A GLOSSARY

Calaminco -May be Calamanco. 1592. (1) A glossy woolen fabric stuff of Flanders, twilled and chequered in the warp so that the checks are seen on one side only.

Chaux (F, FC n,f). F - Lime referring to both calcium oxide and calcium hydroxide.

Citerne (F, FC n, f).- Cistern or tank. In Louisiana two main kinds of cisterns were used. In-ground cisterns might be brick-lined and capped with a dome of brick. Smaller varieties, also called “coolers”, consisted of large earthen jars buried up to their rims, usually in the basement of a house.

Damask – ME. A rich silk fabric woven with elaborate designs and figures ( also applied to fabrics of wool, linen or cotton) . 1585. To weave with richly figured designs. To ornament with or as a variegated pattern. To diaper. 1610. [] Note: it was a common practice at the time to describe the bedstead and accoutrements by the fabric of the bedclothes.

Deal - Softwood from Norway. In 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century softwood floors became common, but oak always preferred. Generally 1 ½” to 2” thick. The present pejorative use of the term is of recent origin.

Diaper - ME. OFR. The name of a textile fabric, now usually a linen fabric, woven with patterns showing up by opposite reflections from the surface and consisting of crossing diamond-wise with the spaces filled up by parallel lines, leaves, dots etc.

Dowlas - Coarse linen cloth named after Doullens, Picardy, France where it was manufactured.

Farradine - May be farrandine: A fabric of silk, wool and hair; also a dress made of this. Named by inventor Ferrand of Lyon. 1630. []

Ghaut - Or ‘gutt’: a ravine. The term, which is commonly used in the Leewards, has a Dutch origin.

Holland - A linen fabric originally called from the province of Holland in the Netherlands. When unbleached called ‘brown’. 1554. []

Lodging - A room used for sleeping that is not in the main house. [Lounsbury]

Lofted porch - In domestic architecture, the upper part of the entrance towers often contained porch chambers connected to the second floor [if existing], which functioned as service or sleeping rooms. As early as the 1690's, a few buildings had completely open porches whose roofs were supported by columns or posts. [Lounsbury. 285]

Messuage - The term 'messuage' was used in land deeds of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, a Middle English term, that referred to 'premises'. According to Lounsbury it is "a legal term used to describe a dwelling house, its outbuildings, cartilage, and the immediate lands associated with it".

Outchamber - A lodging or a separate room used for guests or private study.

Pigeon house - In the southern North American colonies pigeon houses were generally freestanding buildings, often round in plan or raised above ground level on post.

Pigeonnier - Lit: pigeon house. Derived from Roman custom, the dovecote became a symbol of aristocracy in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century France. Peasants were forbidden to hunt on estate lands without permission, and pigeonniers stood as visible expressions of ownership of the land and, therefore, the game upon it, even birds. These structures became architecturally elaborate in France. Something of their symbolism of rank was carried into the American plantation world.

Scrutore - Maybe 'scrutoire' - a variation of 'escritoire' or small desk. 1628.

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## **VITA**

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Daphne Hobson was born in Belize, Central America. She qualified in architecture at Edinburgh University in Scotland, trained in historic preservation at the University of Vermont in the USA and earned her doctorate in architecture from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

She started working as an Architect in the Ministry of Works in Jamaica, and then opened an architectural practice in St. Kitts and Nevis. Projects completed include construction of public and commercial buildings and the recording, adaptive re-use and reconstruction of historic structures. The client list comprised international funding agencies such as the USAID/CDB, the European Development Fund, CIDA/SPIF, as well as corporations like the Bank of Nova Scotia and private individuals.

She gained teaching experience as a Graduate Teaching Assistant at the College of Architecture of Georgia Institute of Technology. She was Preceptor for the History of Architecture survey courses to classes of 54 students in the years 2003 to 2006 and assisted with the Summer Program of Art and Architecture of Italy in 2005. Her studio teaching practice was in a graduate Historic Preservation Studio with Harrison Associates Visiting Professor Gene Surber, FAIA in 2003. In addition she acted as Instructor for the college's outreach program "Architech" at Kittredge Middle School for high achievers in Atlanta, during the fall of 2003. She serves as a juror for undergraduate design studios at colleges in the Atlanta region.

The College of Architecture at Georgia Institute of Technology awarded her the John Templer Award for Outstanding Research in 2006. Earlier awards she received were a Graduate College Fellowship to study historic preservation at the University of Vermont, and a Scholarship from the Jamaican Government to undertake a professional degree in architecture.

She presented a paper on her research at conferences of the South-East Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians in 2004 and of the Society of Post-medieval Archaeology in 2005.

Daphne Hobson intends to pursue her teaching and research interests in the history of vernacular architecture of the Americas, the social history of architecture, historic preservation and Early Christian and medieval architecture.